



A black and white photograph of a person's hands holding a microphone, gesturing while speaking. The background is dark and out of focus.

Essential PUBLIC SPEAKING

Joe Willis

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SCHOLARSHIP BOOK
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ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SPEAKING

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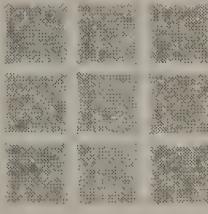
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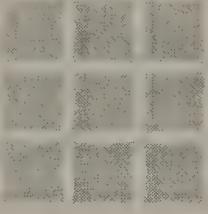


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Preface

Philosophy

The theory behind this book is that most textbooks are written for teachers as opposed to students. Overuse of jargon, lack of reasonable examples, lack of explanation, or explanation based on non-student experience serve as a disincentive for students to read the textbook. This book is not designed to dilute needed content but to reorganize the information in a more usable structure. The approach is to create a book that motivates students to read the book. It must, therefore, be current and concrete so students can easily relate to the content. Students have great demands on their time and we must organize the material so they can learn effectively and efficiently.

Approach

The public speaking class has two goals. The first is to focus the student's attention on the communication process. The speaker must know why a particular speech works in order to improve their performance. In addition to understanding, the student must be able to perform the speech effectively. Public speaking education is incomplete without both communication and performance goals. The outstanding speaker must have both knowledge concerning speaking and the ability to perform a speech successfully.

The content half of the public speaking art includes topic selection, analysis of content, discovery of evidence, critical thinking about the topic, organization of ideas, choosing appropriate language, labeling key ideas, and delivery of the speech itself. Many students are effective in developing content but are unable to present the material effectively to an audience. Delivery of the message includes such things as understanding of the voice and its use, nonverbal communication, adapting to feedback, maintaining poise when things do not go as planned, and holding the audience's interest. Both halves of the process are essential to success. A student may have great content but lack the ability to communicate those ideas to an audience. On the other hand, it is critical that the speaker's content is useful and organized. Some students have great communicative style but lack substance. In other words, they can speak well, but their content may be fuzzy or so trite as to be meaningless. The outstanding speaker balances these two elements of the process to produce a speech that has something meaningful to say and presents the speech well.

Therefore, *Essential Public Speaking* seeks to balance these two elements in its treatment of public speaking instruction through several means. First, the book is designed in a chronological fashion. We examine the first step in the process and then develop the sequence as we move through the process. At each step, we work on both presentation and content, so as to connect the two elements. Second, the book focuses on speech evaluation of each speech performance to explore the connection between content and delivery.

Values of Public Speaking Instruction

Besides the obvious worth of the ability to communicate more effectively with an audience, any number of benefits are associated with the study of public speaking. As a student researches topics and hears other speeches, their knowledge increases. The student of public speaking learns countless facts and develops an appreciation for other points of view. Hearing a speech on a new cancer drug can excite speakers to read more completely on that subject. Not only does the public speaking student become more knowledgeable but their ability

to analyze also improves. The discipline of listening and evaluating speeches hones this skill. The untrained student misses a good deal of information because they lack training. Speech students listen better. A larger pool of information allows them to describe their ideas more clearly. Perhaps a student has just heard a speech on the causes of cancer and how gene therapy might be useful in fighting that particular disease. The untrained listener has only a general idea about the speech while a trained listener can isolate specific solutions offered through the speech. The student reads more about gene therapy, continuing to expand their knowledge. Another value of public speaking is that effective speakers are perceived as more intelligent and more interesting than untrained students are. Studies demonstrate that business and industry place a high value on the ability to communicate in a public setting. When facing an audience, speakers hone and perfect their ideas under the pressure of presenting their thoughts. In addition, public speakers are more effective at sharing and accepting the values of other people. Speech students hear a wide range of topics. This exposure invites and encourages dialogue about issues and values that can be only beneficial to the democratic process. Tolerance of ideas and passionate support of a particular idea are not mutually exclusive. In fact, tolerance helps people understand the other side of an issue. This understanding can assist the speaker in developing arguments and evidence that a multicultural audience will perceive as credible. Testing the speaker's ideas, in front of an audience, is the heat that burns away the impurity of ideas based on bias and or stereotype. Quality public speakers are the "real deal." They have to pass muster in front of an audience. Weak thinkers need not apply for the attention or the belief of an audience. Public speaking is a process toward excellent thinking. Ultimately, speakers are better thinkers because they learn more. Audiences, therefore, give the effective public speaker credibility beyond the reach of the untrained individual.

Public speaking tests our mettle as thinkers and presenters of information in a way that no other communication activity can. This fact explains why public speaking has remained and will continue to be a viable and necessary skill in this age of electronic communication.

Communication Fear

It is the evaluation of the audience that makes public speaking so scary for many students. Surveys have repeatedly placed public speaking fear as a significant concern of speakers. Why are people so afraid of the act of speaking in front of an audience? Essentially, speakers fear rejection. When we speak we define ourselves. When speakers stand in front of an audience, the speaker places their ideas and, more importantly, themselves in a position to be rejected.

The fear makes us feel as though we do not have the experience to speak on the subject because we may not see ourselves as smart enough to address that audience. Speakers may be afraid of feeling different. The audience may be demographically different from them. They may feel that the audience is overly critical. Speakers may feel nervous because they are the center of attention. The greater the differences between the speaker and the audience, the more nervous the speaker may be. The fear may be situational. Teachers may be quite comfortable speaking in their classroom, but become nervous if they are asked to speak in another environment. If the situation in which the speaker communicates requires the audience to judge, there may be a higher level of anxiety.

Not only are there different levels and types of fear but the fear may manifest itself at various stages in the process. For example, the speaker may feel anxious as soon as they are aware that a speech must be given. Knowing that the speaker needs to prepare for the event may make them fearful. The effect of this type of anxiety is that the student may never start the preparation process. A second type of speech fear is preparation anxiety. The student feels overwhelmed by the amount and the kind of work. Procrastination marks this stage. The first problem encountered is a good excuse for stopping work. Students use the “I can’t find a topic” excuse. Many times, they will reject any topic as a way to avoid the speech. They feel more stress as the speech deadline approaches, which may start another round of procrastination. The key here is to focus on small tasks. Achieving each step in the process helps build confidence. When the speech is prepared, anxiety can further sap the student’s confidence so that they will not practice. Students stop rehearsing if the fear becomes too strong.

Perhaps most deadly to speech success is speech anxiety. Stress reaches its highest level as the student is introduced and walks to the podium. The student looks at the audience looking at them. Controlling their nervousness, at this

point, is difficult. Some students stop abruptly. Other signs of anxiety are trembling hands, talking too fast, or random pacing.

Solutions for Speech Fear

Dealing with speech apprehension is a simple concept. It's the execution that's difficult. We know what needs to get done but we can't get it done. There are several things we can do to solve the problem. Prepare the speech completely. View the speech as an opportunity to talk with twenty-five friends. Approach the speech as conversation not as a performance. The public speaking conversation is more formal and more planned. Recognize these differences. The better job the speaker has done preparing the research, organizing the points, and choosing the language, the more confident the speaker is. Speakers should talk about their fears. Effective speakers focus their attention on the **message** of the speech. Make the focal point of the speech, the communication of these new ideas. The less time speakers anticipate how the audience may evaluate the speech, the less stress they feel. Think about communicating with the audience. What specific things can the speaker say or do to help them understand the message? The more you think about the message, the less nervous the speaker feels. Speakers make anxiety worse when they focus too much on how they feel. They take the focus away from the message. Another helpful technique is to visualize speech success. Imagine the speech igniting a round of prolonged applause. Be positive. Practice the speech in the actual room where it will be delivered, if possible. Then, go home and practice. Speakers should visualize being introduced, walking confidently to the podium, and smiling at the audience. When a speaker is nervous, a smile helps the speaker relax. The speaker should act as though they are confident, even if they are not. The audience wants leadership from the speaker. The speaker should be strong and positive, and the audience will reward the speaker. One of the best ways to relax is to pause and breathe. Develop a breathing routine. Start practicing these techniques several days before the speech, so that the technique becomes automatic. Another way to relax is to incorporate movement into the speech. The speech is more visually interesting when the speaker moves, and activity helps to dissipate some of the excess energy that all speakers have.

Another thing speakers can do is to evaluate the speech thoughtfully. Identify key areas of concern and develop solutions so that the next speech is better. Even

the most novice speaker does certain things well in a speech. Note these positive things so that the speaker can repeat them. Another benefit is that the speaker will grow in confidence. Accentuate the positive. As the speaker continues to study, each speech should be easier. The more repetitions of the speech process, the more likely stress can be handled the next time the speaker communicates.

Plan of the Book

- Chapter 1: Model of Communication Process/Communication Process.
- Chapter 2: Audience Analysis.
- Chapter 3: Topic Selection.
- Chapter 4: Evidence/Research.
- Chapter 5: Organization.
- Chapter 6: Language
- Chapter 7: Presentation Aids.
- Chapter 8: Delivery.
- Chapter 9: Listening.
- Chapter 10: Evaluation.
- Resources

Assumptions of the Book

Essential Public Speaking is written with a few assumptions, the first being the idea that less is more. Most textbooks try to cover too much material. The size of the text can overwhelm students. Most classes are too short to cover all the material presented in a textbook. In addition, if teachers can inform students that all the information in a textbook is critical, the students may feel more motivated to read the book. If students wish to pursue more specialized information, they will be able to find it in other resources. Therefore, this text provides only the most elemental information about the process of public speaking.

A second assumption of this book is that students must learn public speaking in sequence. Public speaking is a process and each step builds on the previous step. Most textbooks are structured in a topical pattern. *Essential Public Speaking*

uses a chronological pattern. When confronted with a speaking situation, the first thing the speaker should do is to analyze the situation. That analysis leads to the consideration of a topic. The chapters are listed in the order that students need to learn these ideas.

A third consideration is an emphasis on evaluation. We want speakers to learn how to listen and to evaluate what they have done in their speeches and what they hear other speakers doing in their speeches. The last two chapters are designed to focus students on the idea that critical listening and honest self-evaluation build greater skill and confidence. The more students internalize the process, the greater the chance that they will learn the material. Studies clearly indicate that *using* information helps students to *understand* the information. *Essential Public Speaking* begins with an overview of the process of public speaking in theory, and moves into audience analysis, topic selection, research, organization, language, presentation aids, delivery, listening, and evaluation. The evaluation of each speech deepens each student's understanding of the speaking process. Students are encouraged to describe the public speaking process in their *own* words. Through an emphasis on speech evaluation, each student is given the tools to internalize the public speaking process.

Basically, the objectives are to offer students a clear model of how to communicate in a public speaking situation, provide students with tools for practice so they can learn speaking skills, and teach students how to evaluate what they have heard. The essential and practical steps offered in *Essential Public Speaking* can provide teachers with methods that resonate profoundly with each student.

Process of Communication

This chapter has two purposes. First, describe the basic communication process. Secondly, the model is related to the public speaking process. Whenever we communicate with another person, certain processes occur. Regardless of the type of communication, these elements are in operation. At the most basic level, these variables determine whether a communicator can be successful. Let's define each element and relate each concept to the practical art of public speaking.

Elements of the Communication Process

A **sender** is someone who transmits a message to another person. We are all senders. A person has a message that they wish to share with another person. Instinctively, they **encode**. They select a symbol to represent the idea they wish to communicate. That selection is based on the information the sender has available in their mind. Good communicators choose their symbols carefully to reach the audience and reflect the meaning that they wish to communicate. Think of our brains as a vast storage facility. As each person grows to maturity, they fill their brains with words, gestures, experiences, values, and context clues. We lose or adopt stereotypes as we mature. Each person establishes their filters based on their experiences with parents, teachers, bosses, and others. In short, everyone we meet adds to our storehouse of experience. Each section of our mental warehouse stores our words and our gestures for the expression of ideas and

emotions. When we encode, we search our mind for the correct choice based on our analysis of the situation. For example, we may wish to express our love to our significant other. One choice might be a hug. We may say, "I love you." Another way to communicate the same idea is to send flowers. All three sets of symbols can mean "love." What happens too often is that we do not consider which symbol best communicates our message in a particular setting. The sender encodes a message and sends those symbols to a receiver.

The **channel** is the means for transmitting the message to the receiver. Each channel affects the message in several ways. Let's look a number of channels and explore how the channel might impact our message. At the most basic level, sound waves carry vocal cues to the listeners. In a sensory sense, all five human senses can be engaged in a face-to-face interaction. Sound and sight are the most obvious but not necessarily the most important senses for message reception. We evaluate not only what we hear but also what we see. While feel, taste, and smell may not be involved significantly in a live public speech, they certainly have an impact in interpersonal interactions. In many ways, the face-to-face channel is the best available in that all the senses are engaged. The feel of the moment, the smells surrounding an outside public speech can enrich our decoding experience. Other channels of communication include the internet, compact video, phone, and other audio communication devices. If we communicate only through an audio channel, only paralanguage and verbal clues are available for decoding. The same thing happens when we use video as a medium. We can see and hear the communicator but the other three senses are not significantly engaged. In each kind of channel, the receiver has fewer clues from which to decode meaning. It is simply because any time we move away from the face-to-face interaction, we lose information. Therefore, the effective communicator has to adapt their message to the medium used to send the message.

When the message arrives at its destination, the receiver makes a quick decision to listen or to ignore the communication. The first flash of the message creates a gut reaction in the receiver. Based on that quick read, the message is either decoded or discarded. Assuming the receiver decides to decode the message, the symbols are analyzed. The analysis is based on the receiver's mental warehouse of symbols. The message is interpreted through the decoding process. **Decoding** is the process of assigning meaning to symbols. If the receiver's mental warehouse has enough commonality with the sender's symbols storehouse, communication

may occur. The match is never one hundred percent. The higher the degree of symbol commonality between the two communicators, the more likely that the receiver will decode the message the same way the sender intended.

Feedback is the message the receiver sends back to the sender. The symbols are both verbal and nonverbal. The receiver encodes the feedback in exactly the same way the sender used to present the initial message. Ideally, the receiver confirms the parts of the message that were understood and asks for clarification of those parts of the message that were not understood. The exchange of these messages continues until both sides have satisfied themselves the meaning is shared or the communicators lose interest in the conversation.

Environmental factors like the level of noise, the physical and social situation, and the cultural context are the other factors that impact the efficiency of the feedback. Noise is any interruption of the communication. It can manifest itself in many ways. Audience members may talk while the speaker is communicating. A disruption of that nature can distort the message before the receivers hear the message. Noise can be internal. If audience members are concerned about some other issue, they may not decode the complete message. The messages compete for the listeners' attention. This attention competition distorts both messages. The situation in which the communication occurs can affect both the encoding and decoding of the message. The time of day and the occasion are examples of the situation. At a graduation ceremony, there are certain cultural expectations. The speaker is expected to laud the graduates and describe the power of their future. A funeral brings another set of expectations. The eulogy is an opportunity to express sorrow and to celebrate the deceased's life. The number of people in the audience might dictate how informal the speaker can be as opposed to a larger group.

As the public speaker gains a clearer understanding of these variables, the challenge is to adapt the symbols to reflect the needs of a particular situation. Other types of communication have divergent characteristics. Small group communication involves groups of five to seven people, discussing a single topic. Usually, the group is attacking some specific problem. Dyadic communication is essentially a conversation between two people. Mass communication occurs when a message is sent through some electronic device. It is characterized by a desire to reach a large number of people with delayed feedback from the audience.

Application of the Model to Public Speaking.

Public speaking is typically a single source presenting information to a large audience. The audience has limited opportunity for verbal feedback but unlimited chances for nonverbal feedback. The purpose of the communication is more overt than covert. A conversation may not have an obvious purpose. Public speaking, many times, is much more prepared than other types of communication. That is not to say that other forms are not planned but the degree is less. Another key difference is that the public speech has a more formal feel than other types of communication.

Encoding is less flexible because most speeches require more planning. Therefore, it is harder to change symbols in the middle of a speech. Indeed, it may be quite dangerous to **ad lib** a speech, when speaking in a public forum. In a conversation, communicators may have only a general idea of their thesis. An effective speech requires precision in the creation of the thesis. Decoding of audience feedback is again less flexible because the speaker is under more pressure, at the moment; to perform so there is a tendency to stay with the symbol mix that the speaker has prepared in advance. The higher stress of public speaking makes us less likely to change in the middle of the message. It is more difficult to decode audience feedback but the public speaking situation reduces the amount of feedback. In addition, the speaker gets more nonverbal responses, which are more vague. Instead of encoding for one person, the public speaker must develop messages for a large group. This fact multiplies the difficulty by a factor of the people present. People bring all their filters to the speech. The audience brings a multitude of perspectives to a specific location and the precise occasion in which the speech occurs. A public speech is more complex than dyadic communication.

The public speaker must understand the social and cultural expectations for a potential speech. What bring the audience together at that particular moment? How can the speaker use that situation to communicate their thesis? The speaker must know the connection among the speaker, the audience, and the situation. Why has a particular speaker been invited to a specific event? What does the speaker have in common with the audience? What are the differences?

The speaker must evaluate each part of the communication model and the effect on their message. How will the demographic characteristics of the audience effect the encoding of the message? How will the audience decode the message?

What channel factors are present? Is the audience likely to provide feedback? If so, what are their responses likely to be? In short, the speaker must understand and apply the model to the speaking event.

Discussion Questions

- 1 What is the connection between encoding and decoding?
- 2 In terms of communication success, what is “common ground”?
- 3 Describe and define the concept of feedback.
- 4 Why are speakers so fearful of the public speaking situation?
- 5 Describe the various types of speech anxiety.
- 6 Give examples of noise that might affect the communication process.
- 7 What is encoding?
- 8 What is decoding?
- 9 How does the channel of communication affect the reception of the message?
- 10 What are some of the benefits that result from learning how to speak in public?

2

Audience Analysis

The first step in the public speaking process is to study the audience. The more the speaker knows about the audience, the more effectively she or he can encode the message in a way they will understand. If the speaker has spoken in front of this audience several times, she or he have a strong feel for their values and their needs. The selection of symbols is almost instinctive for such an audience. For example, an experienced teacher speaks over and over again to the same class. As the academic year unfolds, the teacher's "read" of that audience should improve through the repetition of messages. However, a guest speaker is going to have great stress about appearing before such an audience. The reason is simple. The more different the audience is from the usual speaking experience, the harder it may be to encode for that audience. A businessperson may have trouble with a high school audience even though they are great with the Rotary Club. A teacher might feel high anxiety in speaking to the Rotary Club, but feel quite at ease with a classroom full of high school students. The businessperson has a lot in common with the people in the Rotary Club. They run their own businesses, work in varied professions, and are probably closer to the speaker in age than the high school audience. Once the speaker moves away from an audience with which they are comfortable, making a speech becomes more difficult. Speakers tend to conform their speaking style to the audiences to whom they speak most often.

"Audience analysis" means finding common ground with an audience. No matter how different the speaker is from the audience, there must be commonality between the speaker and the potential audience. The fact that the speaker has been invited by a particular group reveals that they see the speaker as someone

who has valuable information or unique insights that interest them. Ironically, it is through a study of the diversity of the audience that speakers can find common ground. In studying the wide range of the audience's values and beliefs, the speaker can see how to fit the needs and concerns of the audience.

The speaker's message must be encoded to connect with the symbol inventory of the audience. Therefore, the speaker must find common words and experiences that resonate with the audience. If large portions of the audience are new parents, the speaker might relate some experiences in that area to explain their topic. If the audience is focused on a particular sport or other event, relate the topic of the speech to that event. The key question is *how* we gather this information about the audience. The speaker can not be certain precisely how an audience may view an issue. Surveys provide insights but not absolute knowledge. The information that a speaker develops about an audience provides a perception of audience values – a feel or sense of how they might respond to a particular concept or explanation of an idea. What sources would they find persuasive? Why? These are some of the questions the speaker is trying to answer. That search leads the speaker to examine the occasion, demographics, and attitudes of the audience.

The Occasion

The occasion itself suggests a number of factors that a speaker should study. Cultural expectations about the speaking event are critical. A graduation speech has certain essential elements: praise of the graduates, a vision of their future, and the audience's hope that the speech doesn't last too long. These elements are not always adhered to, especially the last one, but the good speaker knows these expectations exist. Most parents in graduation audiences are not there to hear a speech but to watch their child graduate. The speaker that ignores the parents' priorities does so at their peril. These expectations should affect the length of the speech, the choice of examples and language, and the structure of the speech. The speaker might want to avoid going into great detail. If the speaker is communicating with a culture that is *significantly* different from their own culture, more study is critical to discover the expectations that the audience has about

the speech. American culture is individualistic. If the audience has a more collective mind-set, the speaker can adapt the message to fit.

In addition to the audience's cultural expectations about the speech, the speaker needs to study the logistical aspects of the audience. How many people are expected? The potential speaker should study the nuts and bolts of where and when the speech takes place. Examine the speaking arrangement. The speaker does not want half the audience looking at their back. It's hard to get feedback, if the speaker can't see the faces of the audience. Speaking at meal-times can be frustrating because of noise and distraction. The audience's attention is divided when they eat and listen at the same time. Ask to speak before or after the audience eats. What is an appropriate length for this audience? Stay within time limits to avoid disrupting their meeting plans. If the audience is more than fifty people, check on the availability of a microphone. Little things can matter: Is the microphone mobile? Nothing is more distracting than preparing a speech in which the speaker plans to be active and then discovers the sound system does not allow for movement. Another key element is lighting. The speaker wants everyone in a position where they can see and be seen. Are there other speakers? What areas are they planning to discuss? In what order will everyone speak?

Demographic Elements

The demographic elements of the speech are things such as gender, age, occupation, religion, and socioeconomic status. Demographics provide objective data about an audience. This information is valuable because it may give the speaker insight into the audience's reactions to a possible topic. If the speaker talks to the National Rifle Association about the need for gun control, the reaction to that position is fairly predictable. On a controversial topic, it is easy to gauge the audience reaction. If the organization has a clear bias on a particular issue, such as the NRA's stand on gun control, it is clear that they would be hostile to any speech that advocated more government controls on the use of weapons. Gender is critical in some topics. A man speaking to women about childbirth needs some special qualifications upon which to base his ideas. Since the mothers in the

audience have direct experience with childbirth, they are going to be skeptical of a man describing the nature of childbirth. If the speech is aimed at a profession to which the speaker belongs, the use of jargon may be effective. However, if the audience does not share the speaker's calling, definitions are in order. The audience's age might eliminate or encourage the use of certain references or examples. Eighteen-year-olds would not remember the day John F. Kennedy was shot in Dallas in 1963, but fifty-year-olds may recall quite clearly what they were doing on that day. A different historical reference is more appropriate for a younger audience. Individuals in their teenage years will have strong and lifelong memories of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Vocabulary should also be evaluated in terms of the audience's age. The idioms of each generation have a huge effect on the encoding of messages to each audience.

Not only does age affect the construction of the speech but religion has a large impact on the way an audience may decode a message. What your audience believes about the "here after" affects what they believe about the "here and now." If the audience is largely Roman Catholic, it is likely that they would oppose abortion. That does not mean that individual members of a specific audience may not disagree with church doctrine. What it does mean is that it is more likely that members of that religion hold a particular belief. The speaker is not trying to peg each person's position, but to get a general idea of how the audience might process information on such a topic. It is important to know the key differences among the various religions of the world. In this way, the speaker can anticipate some of the key arguments that the audience may be thinking about as the speaker communicates the message.

An audience's economic condition will certainly effect their response to a speaker's message. A person raised in the Depression era is more likely to be conservative in money management than someone raised in more prosperous times. In the 2000 presidential campaign, the claim was made over and over that the Bush tax cut was most beneficial for the top one percent of all taxpayers. The clear intention was to mobilize people of lower economic classes to vote for Democratic candidates because of the perceived unfairness of the tax cut. Someone who has never seen citizens who are poor has a hard time relating to them. If all the audience's experiences are at the lower end of the economic spectrum, they may have no conception of the issues faced by wealthy citizens.

Another key demographic characteristic is race. The perception of other races changes how they might decode a particular word in a specific situation. Using the word “boy” to describe a black male is likely to trigger a negative response. The word has a racist connotation for African American citizens. Each culture has key words that are decoded in either a negative or positive way. The effective speaker learns as much as they can about each culture in order to find common ground for their message.

Ironically, the more we study the demographic diversity of an audience, the more common ground we tend to discover. This search takes us into the mental warehouses of different cultures. The key is to keep looking. Often the first things we learn are the differences, but the more we search the more we discover that all human beings share similar desires. Everyone wants to feel secure in his or her homes and persons. It’s key for a speaker to find common ground. All cultures are trying to organize themselves in ways that promote the happiness and well-being of their citizens. The symbols may be different but the underlying motivations are quite similar.

Subjective Aspects

Any time a speaker stands in front of an audience, the speech is evaluated based on a complex set of values, beliefs, and attitudes. These variables are the most subjective of the audience analysis process. It is difficult to gauge audience’s attitudes accurately the first time we speak. The only exception to this fact may be when we survey an audience with the use of a poll. Speakers do not have this luxury. Most public speakers must rely on their individual analysis of a situation. An attitude is a predisposition to respond in a particular way to a specific word or situation. When something is judged as good or bad, we have expressed an attitude. A speaker uses a word or a gesture and the audience has an instinctive response to that symbol. Beliefs are the means that audience uses to express reality. The local culture may view honesty as good and lying as evil. If the speaker’s statements challenge those beliefs, the audience may react negatively. Attacking a core belief is almost always negative. On the other hand, reinforcing a strongly held belief generates a positive reaction. Values are the

core of attitudes and beliefs. Values are attitudes and beliefs that have graduated from the tentative to the permanent. A culture chooses to place certain things above others. That placement is the essence of a culture's values. Celebrity, whether based on sport or entertainment, is high on the value agenda of the U.S. culture. Each culture must be studied to uncover its most cherished values.

In a particular speaking setting, the audience has a perception concerning the speaker and the topic. If the speech is about the state of education in America, the expectation is that the speaker will describe the problems nationwide, but point out how the local schools are superior. It is critical for the speaker to get a feel for why the audience has chosen him or her to speak and what the general opinion is about the speaker. What are the expectations about this event? Would a blunt, hard-edged speech be welcomed? If not, why? If the event is a graduation, many people might object to a controversial speech. They want praise and celebration for that moment and not a challenge to their ideas. The more experienced the speaker is, the more risky a strategy they can employ. A novice speaker may want to exercise caution. Don't lose credibility by speaking at the wrong time. Wait until the audience is more receptive to give a more forceful speech. If the speaker attacks a key value or violates the audience's expectations at that particular time, the audience may react negatively.

Implementing Audience Analysis

Three elements — attitudes, occasion, and demographics — are the key factors in any audience analysis. The key question is *how* does the speaker gather this information. Essentially, there are three methods.

The first method is to interview a representative of the organization. Start the conversation by thanking the person for the invitation to speak. Ask about the speaking situation (when, where, time, length, and other logistical details). Ask them about good topics for their group. Inquire about the procedure for the speech. How is the introduction handled? What precedes and follows the speech? How long is the speech? Mix the procedural questions with the content questions. Before the conversation, rough out ideas for the speech and share those

ideas with the group's representative. Note their reaction to the topic and pursue their ideas about what may work.

Another method for information gathering is to read about the audience and the organization. Every entity has a mission statement or a set of core values to which they adhere. Read all their publications, especially ones that deal with the potential topic. The NRA, for example, provides a great deal of information about gun safety, in addition to its more political purpose of protecting the right to bear arms. Use information published through the organization to support the thesis. Realize that some of the material may be biased or self-serving. Absorb all the data to understand how they might respond to the speech.

A third approach to audience analysis information is to survey the audience about the subject. Political candidates spend millions of dollars polling their constituents so as to prepare messages that appeal to the greatest number of people. Political commercials hone in on the people's perception that a person is liberal or conservative. These perceptions may or may not be based in objective fact. Do an informal poll as the speech starts. Ask the audience to do a survey before the speech. The perceptions generated may be quite general and not apply precisely to the topic.

The more unfamiliar the audience is to the speaker, the more research is necessary. Use **critical thinking** concerning the audience. Carefully examine their values as they relate to the potential topic. Speakers should gauge how much credibility they have with this group. Be honest. Err on the side of caution. There is a natural tendency to believe that we have more credibility than we may have. Review the areas discussed above. Look for creative ways to express the meaning through messages that the audience understands.

One of the great benefits and challenges of good public speaking is to think critically about the speech event. At the end of the analysis process, speakers should know the audience much better. Use a systematic approach to gather information. Speakers cannot know "everything" about the audience. When speakers do effective audience analysis, they can increase their chances of hitting the mark with a particular audience.

Once the speaker has done an exhaustive analysis of the audience, they can start framing the thesis. Up to this point, the central idea has been tentative. The next chapter describes how to take the information developed in the audience analysis to select a forceful and a meaningful thesis.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Why is audience analysis important?
- 2 What is audience analysis?
- 3 How does audience analysis affect decoding? Encoding?
- 4 What are the demographic elements of audience analysis?
- 5 How could the age of the audience affect the speaker's choice of language?
- 6 What attitudinal aspects of audience analysis are critical to the public speaker?
- 7 Describe how the physical location of the speech might affect a speech.
- 8 What are the primary ways that speakers can learn about their audience?
- 9 What are the logistical details that should concern the speaker?
- 10 How might the educational level of the audience affect the public speaker's choice of language?

3

Topic Selection

A powerful thesis is critical to the speaker because it helps focus the audience's attention on the message and guides everything that is done in the speech. The thesis is the center of the speaking moment. It is the hub of the speech. As such, it must be constructed with care. This chapter illustrates how to create a thesis that commands the attention of the audience.

Process of Thesis Creation

Taking the information developed during the audience analysis, the speaker creates a list of topics that might work for that particular moment. There is a tendency to reuse old topics, especially if the speaker has had success with those particular topics. Fight that inclination. Create a new topic for each occasion. List all the ideas available for the graduation speech that is in preparation. Develop the list without **evaluating** each idea. As soon as a potential idea is judged, the flow of new ideas stops. At this point, just list the possibilities. What things are interesting? What issues excite the speaker's passion? What ideas seem to relate to the audience? Divide each idea into smaller units. This brainstorming can be done alone or with other people. It is probably more effective to work in groups but it is certainly possible to do the analysis alone. Think about the audience's expectations. Consider the speaking time available. At the end of the process, the speaker strives to have six or seven reasonable concepts that might work for the speech.

Consider local issues that are current in the area. What issues are arousing interest in the nation and in the world? How do these ideas effect the local community? Look for the unusual or the unique. Another thing to consider is to take an old topic and change the focus. For example, topics like; "The Surprising Power of Hand Washing" can take a seemingly mundane topic and make it quite interesting. In this particular case, the student explored how our failure to wash our hands can lead to deadly diseases. Another unusual topic is "Increased Computer Use Decreases Learning." The audience's assumption is that more computers equals more learning. This speaker's position was that learning does not necessarily follow placing computers in a classroom.

The Internet is a good place to look for topics. Browsing through the magazine racks in your local library is a great way to generate topic ideas. Local bookstores are another good resource. There is certainly no shortage of information on the World Wide Web. The key is using good sense about the topic selection. Search only credible sources. Speakers should constantly be thinking about what can be done to narrow and focus the topic. Speakers must never overload the audience with too much information. It is the speaker's responsibility to narrow the topic so that the audience can absorb the information in the time provided for the speech.

Identify Speech Purpose

What is the overall purpose of the speech? Is it to provide information to the audience? "Building Your Business from the Ground Floor" is an informative topic. The audience expects the speaker to impart information about creating a business. A persuasive speech is designed to change an attitude or behavior. The speech may seek to reinforce an existing value or challenge a view held sacred by an audience. A speaker should ask What does the audience believe now? What is their likely response to the thesis? Do they have lots of information about it? Do they already hold a strong opinion? Are they unaware of the problem and indifferent to the solution? The speaker must think through these issues. If the speech occurs on a particular occasion, that event might suggest appropriate topics. A funeral calls upon the speaker to celebrate the deceased's life, whereas a graduation calls

for a celebration of the graduates' accomplishments. An award speech should justify the presentation of a particular award. Decide what the primary purpose of the speech is, and compare those expectations with potential topics.

Narrow the Topic

After the speech purpose is selected, the next step is to narrow it. A specific, central idea is critical for two reasons. First, the more narrow the focus of the speech, the easier it is for the audience to understand the speech. If the speech is precise, the audience is less likely to daydream. Second, as the speaker develops the speech, everything that is done must focus on the thesis. If the thesis is too broad, the speaker may waste a lot of time researching material that is not relevant to what they are trying to say in the speech. If the focus is too narrow, the speaker may eliminate too much, making the speech abrupt.

The thesis is a claim the speaker is making to the audience. If the claim is fuzzy or poorly stated, credibility suffers. Thesis creation may be the most difficult part of the speech. The key thing is to create an exact claim that is immediately clear to the audience. Ideally, the claim should be so clear as to not need explanation. The audience should collectively think "I understand." How can the speaker do this? In one sense, it is impossible. No two people have exactly the same set of experiences and the same vocabulary. Each person's filters are different. Therefore, symbols received do not match exactly with the receiver's decoding array. The match is only approximate. The idea is to get as close as possible to that ideal. The question is how. What techniques can we use to reach as high a level of precision as possible?

Creating a Precise Thesis

The first approach is to divide the topic into smaller units until the speaker can't find another division for the topic. Think of a claim as a prime thesis. A statement that cannot be divided by anything but itself. For example, if the thesis is "Great Tennis Stars," you can subdivide that topic into modern tennis stars.

Then take the topic “Great Modern Tennis Stars” and talk only about women tennis players. Divide the topic again to discuss great, female tennis players of the 1970s. Keep dividing the topic until it can’t be divided anymore. Another technique is to define each word of the claim so as to make the concept clearer. This technique has the advantage of showing the speaker multiple definitions of the words within the claim. Share the potential topic with other people and ask them to describe what it means to them. This feedback reveals weaknesses in the **wording** of the claim. What is their initial reaction to the topic? Do they understand? Agree? Probe their reactions to specific words, which may incite them to decode the claim in ways that the speaker did not intend. For example, students decoded an assignment titled “Chapter Reports” as a summary of the material in a chapter. What the instructor meant was that the students should teach the class the material in the chapter. This misunderstanding caused confusion until the instructor changed the label to “Teaching Speech.” Students decoded this assignment as teaching the material in the chapters. The teacher had mislabeled the assignment. This process is like a mental spiral, starting at the topic and taking steps toward the bottom, bringing the speaker closer to a better thesis. There is never a perfect thesis but speakers should strive to find the best one available. Practice with the group to try new wording of the thesis to improve the encoding process. Using a group to experiment with the thesis claim forces the speaker to refine and rethink the message. The speaker may change their topic from “Improving Social Services” to “Increasing Support for Child-Abuse Victims.” This type of revision helps the speaker to limit the topic and the audience to focus their attention. Another technique is to do additional research into definitions, examples, and words that better express the idea that is being communicated. The speaker might use a definition of the topic to narrow the thesis. If the original thesis is “Learning Fantasy Football,” the speaker might use a definition of fantasy football from a game producer.

Making the Thesis Relevant

The next step in thesis production is to make it relevant to the audience. The speaker’s language must motivate the audience to care about the speech. The

challenge, at this stage, is to encode the thesis so that the audience decodes the claim as the speaker meant it, and to ensure that they are interested in the concept at first hearing. Focus on their interest in the topic. On the first day of class, what questions are dancing around in the heads of most students? It may be questions such as How hard will I have to work in this class? What will it take to make an “A”? What is the policy on attendance? What’s the teacher like? Can I get here on time from my math class? The thesis for the first day of class is “Making an A in Public Speaking.” Students are practical people. They want to know what is required to get an A. It is good to phrase the thesis in a humorous way. The humor overcomes the opening-day nerves that both students and faculty feel. Encoding is the art of selecting the correct symbol for that audience, in that situation. Over years of teaching, effective instructors learn how to communicate their expectations. If speakers share an interest with an audience, use that common ground to explain the thesis. If the speaker is trying to explain the idea of an introduction to an audience full of track athletes, the speaker might compare the opening of the speech to the start of a race. While the analogy may not be exact, it may be close enough to their experience to explain the idea of an introduction. The speaker tries one set of symbols and then adjusts the message based on the feedback supplied by that audience. Evaluate how the audience responded and then modify the message for the next speech. If there is a large number of basketball players in a class, use that sport as a background to explain key ideas. If the audience is a group of teachers, focus on the common experiences shared in that profession. For example, teachers spend a lot of time discussing “time on task.” The phrase refers to how much time during a class is spent on activities directly related to learning. Any teacher would know immediately what the phrase meant, without explanation. Using jargon when speaking to members of a profession is an effective tool. Another key principle is encoding variety. Speakers should use a number of ways to say the same thing to fight boredom. Speakers should avoid clichés and trite phrases as they encode the thesis. Many high school students ignore antidrug speeches because the speaker may be presenting the same speech they have heard before. In our media-saturated environment, speakers have a harder time being different and standing out.

The essential concept is to phrase the thesis in the language of the audience. There is a real tendency for speakers to prepare the speech, as if they were speaking to themselves. They sometimes assume that the audience has the same life

experiences and vocabulary as they do. This tendency is why evaluation of audience diversity is so critical in finding common ground with an audience. A speaker may, at first glance, appear quite different from the audience. Once the speaker has studied the audience, the speaker may discover that they have a lot in common with the audience. The encoding of the thesis is based on all these factors.

At the end of the process, the speaker has a thesis that is clearly understood and motivating to the audience. As the speech preparation continues, the speaker may revise the thesis as they learn more about the topic and the audience. The speaker should strive to start the process with his or her best topic. A clear thesis generates better research, which is the next step in the process.

Discussion Questions

- 1 How does audience analysis of the speaking situation affect the selection of the topic?
- 2 What should the speaker consider when selecting a topic?
- 3 Should the speaker adjust the topic to fit the audience's perceptions?
- 4 What are some things the speaker considers when selecting a topic?
- 5 What is a thesis?
- 6 What is a claim?
- 7 Why should the speaker select a topic about which they feel strongly?
- 8 Why should the speaker pick a topic that is relevant to the audience's needs?
- 9 What is brainstorming?
- 10 How should the speaker narrow or focus the topic?

4

Research

There are two things that the public speaker is looking for in terms of evidence. The first is specific information about the thesis. What data is effective in explaining and describing the thesis? The second thing an effective speaker wants is quality sources of evidence that are persuasive to that particular audience. Speakers need quality evidence to support their thesis.

Purposes of Evidence

A speaker needs evidence to add to the credibility of their position. The amount of evidence depends on the situation. If the speaker is communicating with an audience that agrees with their position, the speaker's needs for evidence are less. Why beat a dead horse? If the audience is already agrees, focus on motivating their behavior and reinforcing their attitudes. Focus on the more emotional aspects of the problem. If the audience is indifferent or hostile to the position, speakers need additional information. A hostile audience challenges the speaker's ideas and they must meet that challenge. An indifferent audience needs information that incites their interest. The type of information depends on the likely audience response to the speaker's thesis. Find evidence from sources that the audience respects and views as knowledgeable on the subject. Another criterion is the amount of time for the speech. Obviously, the nature of the thesis

drives the research. A technical topic may require definitions and examples to clarify the issue. Speakers may need additional information for a non-technical audience that may not be aware of the jargon for that subject. Do not select evidence that more or less supports the position — choose data that *precisely* supports the thesis.

Types of Evidence

Another objective is to have a wide variety of types of evidence. Research indicates that some audiences are more receptive to certain types of evidence. Common sense dictates that an audience of certified public accountants is going to respond to numbers. Our culture sees numbers as critical. An auditorium full of computer experts is going to respond positively to the speaker's use of Internet sources and technology. Another reason the speaker wants a variety of sources is to build a sense of a wide consensus on the issue.

The effective speaker has to know the various types of evidence and how to use each type. For example, testimony is a statement by a source. The credibility of the evidence is based on our perception of that person or organization. If you quote Bill Clinton to an audience of Democrats, they will perceive him as credible. In front of a Republican audience, President Clinton is not seen as a credible source. Credibility varies not only based on audience but also on topic. A nuclear scientist may know how to harness nuclear power but have no expertise when it comes to explaining social movements. Match the subject with the expert's experience and knowledge. Pick sources that the audience finds believable. Quote the testimony verbatim to ensure the accuracy of the quote and retain the grammatical power of the original statement.

Examples are another type of evidence. An example is the report of an incident. Something happened which the speaker relates to the audience to illustrate or to prove a particular idea. The example can be brief and concise or extended throughout the speech, if it is an example that relates well to the audience. The extended example can long and quite complex. Another type of example is the hypothetical situation. The speaker creates a scenario, which is used to illustrate

an idea or incite the audience's interest in the speech. Facts and statistics are a listing of the number of times a certain thing happens. Approximately fifty percent of marriages end in divorce. That statistic doesn't tell us which specific marriages will fail, only that a certain number are likely to fail. These facts are objective in the sense that they can be verified. Statistics are either descriptive or inferential. A descriptive statistic is used to describe or explain a particular population. An inferential statistic takes a sample from a larger population and makes judgments on how the larger population will respond to a message, based on the sample. A statistician might develop a statistical profile of the students at a college or university. The profile might contain information such as their average age, their gender, and the number of credit hours they are taking. An inferential statistic is the television rating system, in which a sample group records their viewing choices and generalizations are made about the entire population based on that sample. The sample must be representative of wider audience. The effective public speaker uses the topic, the audience, and themselves as criteria to choose the appropriate type of evidence.

Finding Evidence

Where does the speaker find the information for the speech? There is a mountain of evidence available on most topics. With the advent of the Internet, data is so accessible that it can become overwhelming. Speakers need a research plan. Brainstorm a list of possible sources that fit the thesis. Speakers must, constantly, remind themselves that the information is only valuable if it fits the thesis of the speech. Some topics are going to use more **primary** sources such as interviews or surveys that the speaker might undertake prior to the speech. For example, much battlefield research concerns soldiers' letters to their homes. These letters describe some key moment in history to which soldiers are eyewitnesses. Primary research is personal observation. A **secondary** source is material that is based on a primary source, other secondary sources, or from a mix of both types of sources. Decide which type of evidence best fits the thesis of the speech. Consider the time available and match it to the complexity of the topic, and the

audience's knowledge about specific evidence. Overall, the context of the speech drives the use of evidence.

Any primary information used by a speaker must be carefully collected and labeled so as to build its credibility. If using personal observation, specific categories of behavior must be provided, so that listeners can evaluate the research. Perhaps a description of the research method, whether qualitative or quantitative, is a good idea. If observing nonverbal behavior, researchers must identify what exactly they are trying to find. A discussion of past research in the area is also wise because the speaker will gain understanding about what has been done in the past and how the present research fits into that process.

A great way to obtain primary information is to interview an expert. Choose a willing expert who is credible and enlist their help. The expert can provide valuable information and insights that may not be available from any other source. Successful interviewing is based on planning. Significant research should precede any interview. The interview is used to expand information discovered in the speaker's own research.

Create two lists, one of unfamiliar words that need definition, and one of topics that need further explanation or sources. Ask the expert about effective ways to explain their ideas to a nonexpert audience. Develop specific questions to elicit the information needed. Avoid asking vague or easy questions, because the interviewee may see the interview as a waste of time. Avoid creating the impression that the speaker is trying to have the expert write the speech for him or her. Leading questions (where the question suggests the answer) or hostile questions (where the question attacks the interviewee) can only poison the interview relationship.

Request permission from the interviewee to record the session. Accuracy is critical, and recording the interview is the best way to ensure a positive result. Also take detailed notes and always call back to clarify quotes. Complete accuracy is required. Being professional is an absolute must in these situations. Set the interview time and place at the convenience of the expert. Dress in a professional manner and be on time. Thank the interviewee at the close of the interview and, later, send a written thank-you, expressing gratitude for their time and expertise. When appropriate, send copies of the written note to their superiors.

Another primary resource is a survey. Construct a basic, simple, series of questions that elicit information from the potential audience or from some other

appropriate group of subjects. Avoid bias in the wording of the questions and evaluate the results correctly.

Secondary sources are stored in print or in electronic media. Certain topics lend themselves to specific sources. Speakers should become familiar with the Dewey Decimal System or the Library of Congress call number as common ways to find data. Some libraries use card systems but most use computer catalogs and or online sources. The Dewey system is how all these sources are organized. Using a book as a source works only if there is time before the speech. If the speech is about a current topic, research magazines or newspapers. There is a long list of indexes that cover thousands of subjects that a speaker might wish to use. Most computer search engines have these resources listed. Government documents are another good source of information. Much of this information may be linked to primary information, and therefore it is a gold mine of possible sources. Examine the backs of documents and the transcripts of congressional testimony for lists of the sources that were used to write these articles. Encyclopedias can be general or geared to a specific subject. Consult books of quotations to liven up a speech. Don't overlook poetry and prose collections, which may contain examples or analogies that are useful in explaining the ideas in the speech. Literature also helps the speaker to find clever wording that may add variety and spice to a speech. All points of view should be studied and used in the speech to provide the most credible evidence. Examine opposing viewpoints and understand the opposition's thinking. Be sensitive to the cultural balance of sources. Are the sources primarily from one perspective? If so, make a conscious effort to get information from other sources. Another point to consider is the type of evidence. Try to collect examples, testimony, facts, statistics, and other types of evidence. Some audiences may respond better to a particular sort of evidence. Look for a wide range of evidence so that the best sources can be picked and chosen later on in the speech-writing process.

Documentation of Sources

Once the speaker has found the information, the next step is to document all the sources. Record all the appropriate bibliographic data. The principle is that

speakers must provide enough reference data so that the listeners can take the citations used in the speech and find the document from which the evidence was drawn. During the speech the audience must be given the name of each source so that each listener will know that the speaker has consulted excellent references in making their case to the audience. This requirement includes online sources. The bottom line is that every source must be clearly identified.

As the speech is prepared, focus on several key evidence issues. A speaker has the responsibility to present only **truthful** evidence in a speech. Therefore, speakers must evaluate the bias of every source used. At the least, a speaker should explain their bias to the audience. Is the information found in a reputable publication, online or print? Does the evidence run opposite to the trend of most research in that area? That opposite viewpoint does not disqualify using such evidence, but merits investigation. Are the sources of testimony from persons or organizations whom the audience finds credible? Speakers should demand that each bit of evidence be the best available data for the speech.

At this point in the process of creating a speech, the speaker has developed a clear thesis, based on a clear understanding of his or her audience. The speaker has found credible evidence, with a variety of sources and a wide range of types of evidence. The next step is to structure the information in a way that compels the audience to accept the thesis.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Why does a speaker need evidence?
- 2 How much evidence does a speaker need?
- 3 If the audience agrees with the speaker's position prior to the speech, how does their attitude affect the evidence used in the speech?
- 4 If the speaker has only short time for the speech, how does the time affect the speech?
- 5 How does the audience's knowledge of the topic affect the use of evidence?
- 6 Describe the various types of evidence.

- 7 What is testimony?
- 8 What is a primary source of evidence?
- 9 What is the speaker's ethical responsibility concerning evidence?
- 10 Why is the thesis the central focus of research?

Organization

A well-structured speech has balance. It must be predictable enough that the audience can follow its pattern. However, if the speech is too easy to follow, it becomes boring. On the other hand, a bit of chaos spices a speech so that the audience maintains its interest. Each audience has its own balance. Other audiences want a bit more chaos and a little less organization. The speaker's challenge is to find that balance. Chapter 5 is about how a speaker finds the appropriate mix of order and chaos.

Developing the Main Points

The first step is selecting the main points. After the research is complete, group the evidence based on the preliminary supporting points. Organize the evidence according the way the research process played out. For example, speakers will have several pieces of evidence that all group together under one label. Under topic "X" there may be three or four key points that prove the thesis. As the evidence is shifted, speakers find two, three, or four key reasons that illustrate why the thesis is true. Speakers may choose not to use a particular point because of time constraints or because the audience may already believe or accept the idea. Speakers may rewrite or restate an idea. If the purpose is persuasive, the speaker is looking for ideas that motivate the audience to accept the thesis. The main

points of the speech make the connection from the thesis through the main points to the audience. The research might show that women should not smoke because of the medical impact of that habit. A second reason may be the cost of smoking. The evidence might indicate the cost of health care for female smokers and the actual cost of the tobacco itself. Remember that the main points are designed to build the credibility of the idea that women should stop smoking. There may be other points that *could be made* but that the speaker decides not to use. Speakers should use the areas that have the most information and the best evidence.

The next thing to consider is the audience. What do they know about the topic? If the audience is of large number of doctors, for example, the speaker may not need to speak about the health aspects as much or at all. In this case, the speaker might want develop another point to replace the “health aspects” point. The inference is that these doctors are already well versed in the medical impact of smoking on women. Therefore, they might find a discussion of the medical harms of smoking boring and, perhaps, even as an insult to their profession. In this scenario, the speaker may focus on the more psychological and social aspects of convincing women to stop smoking. Essentially, the speaker tailors each point to the audience’s knowledge and perception about that topic. The more specifically the speech fits a particular audience, the more responsive the audience is to your message.

Campaign speeches are a good counterexample to what is being described. They present one generic series of ideas that are pleasing in a vague way, calculated to upset no one. The speech connects to no particular group and attempts to create a positive view of the candidate. Effective public speaking tightens the language to a precise fit of the audience’s perceptions of thesis and speaker.

Another criterion for selecting main points is the speaker’s area of expertise and interest. It is hard to speak forcefully concerning an issue for which the speaker has no passion. If the speaker does not care about these main points, how can we expect the audience to connect with the thesis? Each speaker should pick main points that are critical to their understanding of the thesis. Choose arguments and information that reflect the speaker’s convictions.

The choice of main points is based on the available evidence, audience perceptions, and speaker’s attitude toward the topic. Whether the speech is informative

or persuasive makes no difference. In an informative speech, speakers select the information that is most interesting to the audience, is supported by evidence, and is in the speaker's area of interest and expertise. After the main points are selected, choosing an order is the next step.

Selecting an Order

Which point goes first? Second? The speech arrangement can have a great impact on the success of the speech. The speaker should take time to consider how the audience might react to the order of the points. For example, research suggests that a hostile audience reacts negatively when a speaker challenges their values from the start. That is not to say that in a specific situation a controversial start may not work. In most cases, starting the speech in challenge mode is not the best approach. If the audience is already on the speaker's side, save the best point for last. Send them out into the world motivated with the message.

An indifferent audience is the most difficult because they do not care about the topic. If an informative speech concerns a subject that is boring to the audience, the speaker has to arrange the speech to engage their interest. You must show them how the topic relates to their lives at the present time. Many students may perceive public speaking as uninteresting or not useful to their lives. The public speaking teacher must find a way to elicit interest in the subject. Speakers may want to start the speech with a dramatic main point. Perhaps a quote from a famous celebrity about the importance of public speaking might persuade the audience. Use the first point to show how learning public speaking will assist them in meeting their **needs**. Examine the primary needs of the audience and illustrate how the speech can help them reach their idea of success.

Researchers have established a number of speech patterns or structures for the ordering of a speaker's points. While there are a number of patterns, four approaches are used most often. These structures are useful for the overwhelming majority of speeches.

The **chronological** pattern places the points in sequence. For example, this book is chronological. It is organized to describe the steps used to construct and

to present a speech. The sequential approach is excellent if the speaker is trying to describe an event or a process. The chronological approach assists people in organizing their experiences, which gives a sense of control over the speech. Many speakers like this pattern. If they get lost, they can move to the next step without breaking the flow of the speech.

The second pattern is the **topical** structure. Topical speeches are divided into subtopics. A speaker divides their topic into subtopics that allow more depth of discussion than if the thesis was discussed all at once. If the topic is “Key Moments in the Civil War,” speakers can divide the topic into the events they see as critical in the history of that conflict. Events are not presented as they occurred in real life. The speaker could discuss the “Battle of Gettysburg” first, if they felt the audience was better suited to understand the thesis that way. This pattern allows the speaker maximum freedom to organize the speech in a way that best suits the speaking moment.

The third pattern is **problem/solution**. As the term suggests, the first point is the problem and the second point is the solution. This pattern is effective for persuasive speeches because it provides a venue for explaining what’s wrong and how to fix it. For example, in the first point the speaker should define the causes and the effects of the problem on our society. Judicious use of evidence and discussion of evidence is the norm for the first point. The solution section focuses on meeting the causes outlined in the first point. In addition, the speaker ties the solution to the values of the audience; there is a greater chance of adherence to the speaker’s thesis.

The fourth pattern is **order of importance**. The speaker decides which main point is the most important and places it first or last, depending on the audience. Much research has shown that audiences pay more attention both at the start of the speech and at the end of the speech. Therefore, placing one point first may garner it more attention from the audience. Putting the weakest point in the middle of the speech tends to lessen its effect on the audience. The likely attitude of the audience toward the thesis is the key. A neutral attitude toward the thesis may influence the speaker to place their best supporting evidence first to entice the audience to pay attention. If the audience is hostile, starting with the weakest point or the point closest to the audience’s opinion may be the best option. Beguiling a hostile audience into agreeing with the speaker early on in the speech can influence them to agree with the overall thesis later on. As the speaker moves

into the more controversial part of the speech, he or she has already established a bit of common ground with the audience. Using this approach is dangerous because the audience can be misjudged.

Regardless of the pattern selected, the key is to arrange the speech in an order that connects with the audience. They must understand the progression of the speech. In addition, the speaker must be comfortable with the arrangement of the speech in terms of their purpose and the available information. Audiences need enough spice to maintain interest with an organizational structure. Spice is unique evidence or a creative analogy that piques the audience's interest. Look over the vocabulary in the speech and evaluate whether the audience may not understand the terms being used in the speech. If the concept is central to the audience's acceptance, define and explain thoroughly. Anticipate which ideas the audience needs explained in order to establish the speaker's position as credible. Study each point carefully. Practice out loud and evaluate the audience's likely response. Taking the time to explore these issues carefully can make the speech unique and gain that crucial bit of attention that all speakers want from their audience.

Creating Individual Main Points

Once the supporting points are in the best order for the speech, each point must be fully explored. What are the steps that the effective speaker takes to make sure that each point is fully developed? There are a number of key things that the good speaker can do to create strong main points. The first is to focus on a single idea in each main point. In other words, if the speech's two main points are the costs and benefits of a particular idea, than the points should be clearly different. If point one deals with costs, nothing but costs should be discussed in that point. Audiences are confused when speakers mix subjects within their main points. All the evidence should concern the cost and *nothing else*. Ensure that all the points are approximately the same length. Point one should not be three minutes long and point two, only one minute. The audience begins to question the value of the shorter point instead of the nature of the point itself. If one point is significantly overdeveloped, it may need to be split into two points. On the other hand, a short

point may need additional information or stronger explanation to build its credibility. Protect the credibility of each point so that there is the least amount of confusion possible in the minds of the audience.

There are essentially five steps in creating a main point. The first key is to state the point. Develop a label, usually a short, powerful, statement that encompasses or summarizes the essence of the idea. TV commercials are a good source for learning about these types of statements. “Don’t Mess with Texas,” “Got Milk?” and “America’s News Leader” are all examples of strong labels. Listeners need a precise signpost as they decode a message. Summarize the main point in a key phrase.

Design the phrase to connect with the audience. Some speeches may require more complex wording. However, keep the main point label as concise as possible. Never sacrifice meaning for conciseness. Students sometimes need a longer label to communicate the thesis to the audience. If that’s the case, so be it. Speakers should encode specifically. It’s more important to be correct than to be short. However, the tighter the label, the more likely the audience is to remember the main point. Because a speech is an aural, not a written, event, it is harder for an audience to remember the points. When dealing with a written document, the reader can review the point multiple times. A speech point is literally in the air between the speaker and the audience. Speakers that keep points simple and clear have a better chance that the audience will decode the message as sent. There are often distractions during a speech that keep the listeners from hearing the message clearly. Assist the audience in the decoding process through precise wording of main points.

The second step in the process is to cite and present evidence. Regardless of the source of the evidence, the speaker is required to *orally* report the sources of the evidence used in that main point. The sources are cited *during* the speech as opposed to at the end, such as the resources in a written paper. If the source is a person, give the time and date of the interview. If a web site is used, give the listeners enough information to access it, so they can verify the evidence. Different types of sources are used for different speech topics and purposes. If the speech is about a current event, Internet, magazines, newspapers, and media sources might be primary places to search for data. A historical speech may cite more books and letters. Regardless of the topic, speakers must give credit to sources. Use a wide variety of sources to support the point. Variety increases credibility

because listeners assume that if multiple sources say the same thing, it is likely to be true. Use multiple source types for the same reason. Use testimonials and statistics to prove the point. Some audience members may like testimonial evidence while others are more influenced by statistics. Using multiple evidence types maximizes the chance that the audience finds a source that connects with their experience and listening filters. Decide on the number of quotes based on how much time is available for each point and the quality of each item of evidence. Evaluate each piece carefully and rearrange the order to better explain each point to the audience. A good way to physically organize the evidence is to place each piece of evidence on 4-x-6-inch cards. The order of the cards can be changed easily. In addition, place the citation information on the card. Title, author, and name of publisher are typical of citation information.

Once the audience has heard the evidence, the speaker must explain the main point as supported by the evidence. In some ways, this step may be the toughest. Speakers have trouble understanding the difference between evidence and explanation. The idea seems to be that the evidence needs no explanation. Sometimes, evidence does not need explanation for the audience to understand or to believe an idea. However, it is unlikely that any audience shares so completely the speaker's perspective that just "hearing" the evidence is enough to persuade them to act. Many times, there are words that need definition or ideas that need clarification. The speaker is expected to provide necessary information to help the audience understand a particular concept. A speaker can never assume that a simple recitation of evidence convinces an audience of anything. Audience analysis may have targeted certain concepts with which an audience has experience or understanding. There are too many mental filters and stereotypes that can distort the reception of the evidence in the audience's thought processes. The effective speaker explains each piece of evidence, focusing especially on *how* the evidence proves or illustrates the main point being discussed. If an instructor has assigned chapters to be read, the student expects the teacher to explain and highlight key ideas and phrases. Students want teachers to relate the new information to the students' past experiences. How does the new information fit in with the material learned two weeks ago? Speakers should be looking for analogies and comparisons that are relevant to the audience. Connect the main point being discussed to a concern or a need the audience sees as critical. The speaker must answer questions such as Why does it matter to me, today? Who cares? How can

learning what the speaker offers change me? It is the relevancy question that the speaker must answer in the explanation step. We provide these answers through the use of analogy and description. For example, a recent television commercial compares a computer company to a basketball team, while it struggles to protect its network. Speakers can use visual aids or concrete language to develop our understanding of a concept.

The fourth step is to summarize the main point. An internal summary helps the audience lock the idea into their minds. The speaker restates the original main point in another way. The purpose is to restate the point without boring the audience. The opening main point label is “smoking causes cancer.” In this step, the speaker rewords the same concept. “Smoking has been linked to many types of cancer” repeats the original main point’s meaning, in slightly altered words. If the speaker repeats the original label exactly, the audience is bored. They have already heard that point. They may daydream. The summary can also add a little spice to speech. Variety is key to maintaining the audience’s attention. Variety is critical because it helps overcome the tendency for the audience to daydream. There are many distractions in every environment that can pull the audience’s attention away from the speaker’s thesis.

The fifth step is to create a transition. It is at this point that we move to the next point in the speech. Listeners can slip away here because the speaker has finished one idea and they may lose interest while the speaker makes the transition to the next point. Once the speaker finishes one section of the speech, audiences tend to relax while they wait for the next point. The speaker must maintain the audience’s attention. If there is a long pause between the points of the speech, all the other distractions can grab hold of the audience’s attention. Therefore, the speaker needs a transition that moves quickly to the next section of the speech *before* the audience loses focus. The speaker must keep the listeners engaged. The transition can be a sentence, an example, a phrase, a piece of evidence, a quote, or nearly anything. The transition is like a relay race, in which each person does their part and then hands the baton to the next person. Each part of the speech is like one of the legs of a race. If the runners drop the baton, the race is disrupted. In the same way, if the speaker fumbles the transition, the audience may stop paying attention. The speaker must ask the question, “How does the introduction connect to the first point of the speech?” The audience needs a specific link

from each part of the speech to the next part. Once the speaker has a precise idea of what the connection is, they must encode the correct words to express that connection. A speaker can ask, “What can I say or do in the speech to communicate the connection between the first and second points?” How that question is answered determines the quality of the transition. Keep revising the wording until the transition is seamless and unnoticeable. Practice the transition aloud to see how those words bridge into each section of the speech. Brainstorm all the possible transitions and experiment with each one until the precise wording is found.

At this point, the speaker has completed the body of the speech. The speaker should have a clear idea of the thesis and how the speaker plans to support it. The speaker knows which main points are going to be used and in what order to present them. The body of the speech is the first part completed. Completing the body of the speech first allows the speaker to know what they are introducing. The speaker can now realistically begin the process of preparing the introduction.

Preparing the Introduction

The introduction may be the most critical part of the speech. Within the first few moments of the speech, the audience decides whether to give the speaker their complete attention. The speaker must hook the listener immediately. Audiences give polite attention to most speakers but what is needed is their total focus on the speaker’s message. How do we set up the speech so that the audience gives its total attention to the speech?

The first thing we have to understand is what the speaker is competing against for the audience’s attention. What are the distractions that are interrupting the flow of communication between speaker and audience as the speech begins? There are the external noise factors in the speech. The temperature of the room, the number of people in the room, any random noise in the speaking situation, and the lighting in the room are just a few examples of external distractions. Internal noises are things within the audience’s mind that are competing for

their attention. Examples might include the mental state of the listeners, the emotional condition of the audience members, personal issues, and the audience's physical condition. An audience of people who are tired may not listen as well. Good speakers recognize these situations and adapt their message to these potential problems. Speakers can shorten their message if the distractions are strong. If the speaker has a luncheon presentation, they might want to speak before lunch. While not eliminating the distraction of lunch, hopefully, the distractions will be less intrusive. Servers are not walking through the audience's line of sight as the speaker talks. Silverware is not banging against plates. Speakers either eliminate or adapt to the distractions in each speaking situation. As the speaker is introduced, the audience has several competing distractions fighting for each member's attention.

Attention Step

The introduction includes an attention step. As the name implies, the speaker takes steps to gain the audience's attention. For example, the speaker can ask a rhetorical question. This type of question is designed to incite the audience to think about the topic. A story can be used. The critical aspect of the attention step is that it must directly connect the audience to the thesis. Many speakers like to start their speeches with a few jokes. But imagine that after a speaker has spent several minutes telling jokes about a local college football team, he says "Now that I have your attention, let's talk about life insurance." The audience experiences a disconnect while they try to decide what the connection is between the jokes and the thesis of the speech. Not only do the jokes distract attention from the thesis but it also encourages the audience to think about football, not life insurance. The attention step must be appropriate to the audience and the situation. In the audience analysis, speakers learn why the audience has gathered. Fit the attention step to the audience's purpose for being there. If the speech is at your best friend's funeral, locker-room humor is not appropriate. The funeral oration should not start with "Wonder how old John is doing right now?" Focus the audience's attention on the thesis and make sure it is appropriate to the speaking moment.

There are a number of ways to open a speech. The speaker can start with a quotation from someone who the audience knows, or use a statistic or fact that illustrates the thesis of the speech, or tell a story that captures the essence of the speaker's message, or use an example or an analogy that parallels the idea behind the thesis. The speaker can refer to the occasion or to members of the audience to connect with the audience. The speaker can say something startling or different: "Learning is not what schools are designed to achieve" is an example of such a statement. The key here is to combine an unusual series of ideas that will surprise the audience.

Regardless of which technique is chosen, the speaker tries to find the one approach that represents the thesis, finds common ground with the audience, and is appropriate for the moment. The attention step must show the audience what they have in common with the speaker. Establish the bond with the audience immediately as the speech begins. Do not wait until the speaker is well into the speech to find common ground with the audience.

Thesis Statement

The second element of the introduction is the statement of the thesis. In that statement of thesis, the speaker should have a clear purpose for the speech. This statement must be orally highlighted for the audience. One way to emphasize the thesis statement is to pause before and after it is presented to the audience. The speaker might say it just a notch louder or change their pitch to highlight the goal of the speech. The speaker may need a transition from the attention step to the thesis. Keep this transition as precise and as short as possible. If the transition takes too long, reevaluate the attention device. If it takes too much explanation to move from the attention step to the thesis, the attention step may need changing. Don't be afraid to reword the thesis if the present structure is awkward. The thesis should be stated clearly, so that no one can misinterpret the message. For example, the Best Buy commercial thesis, "Turn on the Fun," is a clear summary of why consumers should spend money at that store. In one short phrase, the audience knows immediately what the message is. Reworking the thesis multiple times is a good way to approach the precision the speaker needs.

After the speaker describes the thesis, they should provide motivation to the audience about the speech. What can the listeners gain from hearing the speech? How can this topic affect their personal and professional lives in a positive way? Describe the stake that the audience holds in that particular topic. A teacher tells a class, “study these words because they are on the test.” The speaker has given the audience a reason to study the material. A manager offers the members of the sales force a trip to Bermuda, if they sell more than anyone else does. The speaker is giving the salesforce a reason to work harder. Answer the audience’s unspoken question, “Why should I care?” The speaker’s audience analysis should provide clues as to what the audience’s concerns and needs are. Connect the thesis to those needs. Essentially, say to the audience, “I know you have the following needs . . . The thesis meets those needs.”

Preview

The third part of the introduction is the preview. A preview is a list of what the speaker is going to talk about in the speech. As the thesis is stated, a few words of transition are necessary to lead the audience to the preview. “In order to completely understand thesis X, we have to examine three key ideas” is an example of such a transition. One break in the flow of the speech allows the audience’s attention to drift. State clearly and highlight each main point to be discussed. Do not provide evidence or any explanation at this point. Those things belong in the body of the speech. The preview is a list of what’s coming in the presentation. A preview is like a grocery list. The speaker gives the audience a list of things that they promise to discuss. The shopper uses the list as a plan for the shop and the speaker uses the preview as a plan for their speech. The audience sees how the speech is going to develop and wants more information. If the speaker gives too much information in the introduction, why would a listener pay attention to the rest of the speech? Once the preview is presented, do not change it. Changing the main points in midspeech confuses the audience and gives them an excuse to ignore the speech. In addition, the speaker has an ethical obligation to be consistent.

Transition

The fourth step is the transition to the first main point of the speech. The speaker has previewed the speech and is now ready to move into the body of the speech. The speaker can simply say “Let’s look at the first point.” This is certainly not an inspired transition, but the transition should not draw attention to itself. Look for a simple way to move into the first point. Perhaps the speaker can pose a rhetorical question, dramatic statistic, or any of the other attention step devices that are discussed earlier in this chapter. Keep the wording precise and brief. Practice various methods of making the transition until the best option is found for that particular speaking moment.

Summary

The discussion of the introduction so far has focused on the verbal aspect of the opening of the speech. While delivery is discussed later in the book, there are a few key things that the speaker should do to enhance the opening of the speech. Therefore, several delivery issues are critical when planning and preparing the introduction. The speaker should discuss with the appropriate person how they will be introduced and what that person plans to say about the speaker. Point out key qualifications that the speaker wants mentioned in the introduction of the speaker or provided to the audience in some fashion. The effective speaker wants to know where and how their speech starts. A previous speaker might say things that the second speaker is planning to say. In that case, the prepared speaker has a number of areas that they could discuss. It’s much better if the person introducing the speaker describes their qualifications, because it sounds much less self-serving than if the speaker toots their own horn. If there is no formal introduction, the speaker’s qualifications should be slipped into the body of the speech.

At the moment that the speaker is introduced or the speech starts, effective speakers establish eye contact with the audience. Look at specific individuals and smile. Walk confidently to the speaking area and take out the speaking notes.

The speaker should take a deep breath before beginning the speech as they survey the audience. This approach builds audience anticipation. Once the speaker has started the speech, continue the generous eye contact, looking down only as needed to consult the outline. Keep random movement under control. In these opening moments, create the impression of a well-prepared individual with something critical for the audience to hear. Practice the correct tone and volume for the specific situation in which the speech occurs. The effective speaker understands that each occasion requires a tone. The graduation speech is a celebration, and therefore the speaker should adopt a tone of praise, whereas a eulogy is a more somber moment and calls for a more quiet, serious tone to meet the cultural expectations of the audience. Audiences are evaluating not only what the speaker is saying, but also how the speaker is communicating. It is during the introduction that the audience decides how much attention the speaker deserves, and it is critical that the opening nonverbal delivery and verbal delivery be flawless.

The speaker needs to evaluate the quality of the introduction before they speak. There are several things that are critical to study. The first is the length. An effective introduction should last about ten percent of the speech's length. If the speech is seven minutes long, a one-minute introduction is about right. If the introduction is too long, edit out unneeded material. Does each word contribute to an understanding of the thesis? Is there transitional language that can be removed or shortened? Present the introduction to a trusted friend or colleague. Get their reaction to the ideas and the flow of the ideas. When the introduction is complete, continue to revise it carefully.

Preparing the Conclusion

Once the speaker has completed the introduction, the last step is to write the conclusion. It is critical that the audience leaves the speech with a clear sense of what the speech's message was. The conclusion is the last thing the audience hears and, therefore, the speaker needs to create a powerful and focused ending for the speech. This approach provides the listeners with a motivation to maintain their attention to the last moment of the speech.

The speaker wants to provide clear clues that the conclusion is approaching. As the final point of the body of the speech is presented, the audience knows that the conclusion is coming. “What have we learned today?” is a common way to make the transition from the body of the speech to the conclusion. Follow the same guidelines as suggested with all transitions to develop the tie-in to the conclusion. For example, a testimonial can be used. A speaker could use a statistic or a fact to indicate that the speech is ending. For instance, the speaker can say, “So, what have we learned today?” Without directly saying so, the speaker has cued the audience that the speech is ending. Another way to cue the audience is to ask rhetorically, “How does all this affect us here today?” A third way for the speaker to this clue is to pause, smile, and summarize the speech’s main points. Once the speaker sends the subtle signal that the speech is almost over, it is critical the speaker finish the speech in a reasonable amount of time. A long pause after the final point is another way to signal that the speech is ending. Sometimes, a speaker starts the speech, communicating in the center of the room. Many times, the speaker moves to a new location as they relate each point. When the speaker moves back to the center of the room, the audience decodes that centering movement as a signal that the speech is nearing a conclusion.

Parts of the Conclusion

The conclusion has four parts. The first thing the speaker does is to repeat the main points of the speech. What is critical here is to use different language to review the points. The reason is that if the speaker uses the same language as in the introduction, the audience jumps too far ahead of the speaker. They assume the speech is over and they stop listening. The speaker wants to avoid that impression as long as possible. If the speaker says “In conclusion” or looks at his or her watch, the audience may decide that they can stop listening. Many audiences see the conclusion as merely a rehash of the speech. Therefore, they stop listening. The speaker must find a new way to present the main points of the speech. The new wording cannot change the *meaning* of the main point. For example, the original main point may be “That the cow jumped over the moon.”

When restating that main point, the wording must be different. The speaker might say that "A milk-producing animal took flight over the celestial object closest to Earth." The meaning is the same but the symbols are different. If the original main point is "Murder is wrong," the restated version has to be different. "Taking another human life is wrong," is an example of how the speaker might repeat the meaning while using new symbol combinations.

The second step is to repeat the thesis of the speech. Again, a key element is to repeat the thesis but say it differently than in the introduction. The purpose is to maintain interest and to focus the audience's attention on the speaker's purpose. Restate why the topic is so important to the audience. Remind them, in different language, how critical their understanding of the thesis is to their lives. Give specific reasons why the data the speaker has given them affects their *present* life situation. Essentially, the idea is to tie the thesis to the values of the audience. The speaker's analysis of the audience should give the speaker clues as to which values are critical to a particular audience.

The third step is the appeal to motivate. Tell the audience what they need to believe or do. What actions does the speaker want them to take? The speaker may explicitly describe a specific use of the information that the speaker has shared with the audience. How can their lives be made different through the use of the speaker's information? If the purpose is persuasive, provide some action for the audience. What beliefs and values should the audience change? The language here is direct and forceful. Give specific examples and instructions of how to use the information. The speaker must answer the question, "How should I use the information that the speaker has given me in this speech?" Describe for the audience the application of the speaker's message. The audience wants and needs to know how the material presented can affect their lives.

The fourth part of the conclusion is the tag line or the frame of the speech. The tag line is literally the last thing that the audience hears from the speaker. It is the final words that close the speech. For example, in the introduction, the speaker may have asked a rhetorical question. In the conclusion, the speaker answers the rhetorical question with which they opened the speech. The speaker may open the speech with the beginning of a story and close the speech with the ending of the story. The speaker might quote a famous person to buttress their position. The speaker can use an example. The key idea here is to

develop a word or a phrase that sticks in the audience's mind. Use an analogy to close the speech so that the audience has a comfortable image with which to remember the speech. A great resource for learning about tag lines is television commercials. Television imposes time constraints and advertisers are forced to headline their persuasive messages. Whatever tag line is used, it should relate to the opening attention step in some way. The tag line is used to close a speech. When the speaker uses a story to open the speech, an effective approach is to split the story in half. Use the first half for the attention step and use the second half for the tag line. Another method to frame the speech is to ask a rhetorical question in the attention step and then answer the question in the tag line. Using this approach can provide a powerful close to the speech. Speakers that use this technique create much tighter speeches that end dramatically and clearly.

Evaluating the Conclusion

Once the speaker has put all four elements together, they need to evaluate the conclusion. There are several things that the speaker should examine. First, are all the elements of the conclusion present? Are the main points repeated in an effective way? Study each section in terms of the wording used. Check the length of the conclusion. It should last no more than about ten to fifteen percent of the speech. In a seven-minute speech, the average conclusion should last about one minute. As the speaker practices the conclusion, make sure that the ending is not too abrupt. Speakers sometime simply stop after the body of the speech is complete. Usually, their conclusion consists of "Well, that's it." The speech ends awkwardly and the audience is mentally jerked to a stop. Another thing to avoid is the overlong ending. Many times, speakers keep repeating the key message over and over. Speakers commit this error because the audience may not respond in the way they want or they may feel that the audience needs more time. The conclusion should sound natural and relaxed. As the practice process continues, the effective conclusions become seamless and conversational. They flow easily.

Discussion Questions

- 1 What is the purpose of organization?
- 2 Why should the speaker develop the body of the speech first?
- 3 What is the purpose of the conclusion?
- 4 What is the purpose of the introduction?
- 5 What is a chronological pattern of organization?
- 6 What is the difference between evidence and explanation?
- 7 Why are transitions so critical to effective organization?
- 8 What is the purpose of a thesis?
- 9 What is a tag line of a speech?
- 10 Describe the five-step process of developing a main point.

6

Language

Words are the currency of communication. The more words that the speaker can use, the more powerful the speaker can be. This chapter describes how to choose and how to use language. The speaker's ideas are clothed in words. Speakers need to study daily. This study must include significant reading and viewing about current events. In addition, a longer look at critical classic and historical works helps the speaker become more knowledgeable about the world. Ultimately, the speaker that works hard at developing their word power is bound to communicate better. This person has a greater choice in encoding messages for audiences who may be quite different from them. Speakers should have a daily routine that focuses on developing their word bank.

Power Language

As each speaker encodes a message, they should focus on several key guidelines that can make their language more powerful. At the most basic level, the language chosen must fit the audience, the occasion, and the thesis. First, speakers study the values and beliefs of an audience so they can use language that is easily decoded by that audience. An obvious example is jargon. A teacher knows what the "lesson cycle" is. Nonteachers do not. Therefore, use teacher jargon for a teacher audience. If the speaker has a reasonable expectation as to the meaning of a word to a particular audience, it may be appropriate to use that word.

Second, evaluate the occasion to eliminate certain words and include other words. If the occasion is more formal, the language probably should be more formal. A somber moment, like a funeral, may require gentler, more subdued language from the speaker. The speaker might say, "Joe was a great person and we will miss his humor. Death has no power over our memories of him. He was a great person." The pace is slower because the speaker wants the audience to remember these characteristics. The language choice is built on the speaker's analysis of the situation. The speaker's audience analysis should provide some hints about the proper language for a particular moment. A wedding ceremony is certainly no place for wild tales of the groom's party days as a single man. Third, the thesis may suggest that certain language is required. If the thesis is medical, the language is likely to contain a number of medical references. If the audience is not in the medical profession, more time may be needed in explaining or in defining key concepts. Initially, the speaker looks at these elements to choose the correct language.

Language Shares Meaning

Language exists to allow people to share meaning with other people. Each partner in the communication must have some symbols *in common* with the speaker. Otherwise communication cannot occur. In other words, don't use forty-dollar words when a twenty-dollar one does just as well. Keep the language as simple as the topic and the situation allows. If a speaker is discussing the nature of the atom, she or he might use a model to illustrate how electrons orbit the nucleus. If the speech involves nuclear fission, which includes atomic structure, there is a need for additional description and explanation. The increase in complexity requires more information to assist the audience in understanding a fairly complex idea. If the audience is full of nuclear scientists, little explanation is needed. An inexpert group needs more data. As the level of complexity grows, define and explain more fully. Another key idea is precision or conciseness. The fewer words the speaker uses the less chance the audience has of incorrectly decoding the message. Fewer words, in addition, force the speaker to choose the *exact* word. TV

and radio commercials have thirty or sixty seconds in which to communicate the idea. Therefore, each word's importance is critical to having the audience decode the message correctly. Not a word that is *close to* the meaning, but *precisely* the meaning the speaker intends.

Analyze the audience's knowledge concerning the concept. Do they have a connotative understanding of the word? Is the concept in their everyday experience? Is their only understanding of a particular word based primarily on denotative or dictionary meaning? If the audience has *direct experience* with a particular word, connotative meaning may be needed. If not, the speaker may need to start with a dictionary definition and move on through a specific explanation. Paint a picture with the words. Select language that creates pictures in the mind of the audience. Use concrete images as opposed to abstract ones to illustrate an idea. Concrete refers to an item that can be experienced directly through the five senses. Relate the content to something that the audience can feel. "Her fingers felt like dried fish scales." Use all the senses to communicate concepts. Abstract words are more general categories of language. Audiences decoding an abstract word are more likely to misread the speaker's message than a concrete word. The uncertainty of abstract language invites confusion. Concrete language is less uncertain because it provides a more specific response. The abstract term *boy* is a relatively generic term, whereas *Joe* is more specific.

Another way to connect with an audience is to appeal to the senses, for example, "This idea has a particular smell." The speaker relates their idea to one of the five senses. Focus on figures of speech to add spice to the language of the speech. A simile where two things are compared directly, with the words "like" or "as," is an effective way of explaining a concept or relating the idea to an audience. The technique is to compare the new thing to something that the audience already understands. Essentially, the speaker bridges one idea to another one. Another technique that uses the same theory is a metaphor, where the speaker compares one thing to another by defining it as the second thing. For example, the speaker might say, "Love is a rose." An analogy is extended metaphor or simile in which the speaker compares a familiar idea with the new concept that the speaker is trying to explain. Effective speakers mix these figures of speech into their presentation to add flavor and uniqueness to the speech.

Language and Credibility

Use of language is one way that speakers build their credibility. The first thing the speaker wants to do is to use wording that is appropriate to the situation. If the audience is unknown, the speaker should keep to a more traditional grammatical and usage structure. A speaker with a more homogeneous audience can take more risks and use a more informal style. One obvious thing that the effective public speaker must avoid is slander. Attacking others, even if justified, rarely does the speaker any good. Audiences are going to perceive the speaker as overly negative. The speaker has an ethical obligation to avoid false statements or misleading statements. Omitting facts in a speech is just as unethical as telling a direct lie.

Traditional audiences may prefer that the speaker use more denotative language. Denotative wording is the literal meaning of the word. It may be more effective to use literal responses when the audience is more traditional or has a different philosophy about the speaker's position. Connotative meaning is more dangerous because various groups or individuals may decode the same word quite differently. The phrase "family values" implies a whole set of values and images to a right wing Republican. A liberal Democrat may respond to the same phrase from quite a different point of view. A conservative philosophy might focus on cutting taxes to help families. A more liberal approach might be to create a government program to assist families. The speaker must choose specific language that the audience will understand.

Another aspect of building the speaker's credibility is the use of voice in public speaking moments. Active voice is better than passive voice for speeches because it provides a sense of motion and unity. Active sentences are ones in which the subject performs the action. It is simple and easily understood. "Randy ran fast" is an example of writing in active voice. "The fast run was made by Randy," is in passive voice. The second sentence is wordy and separates the audience from the action. Active voice also provides a stronger emotional push than using the passive voice. Another example of how language can effect the communication process is using personal pronouns. It sounds more natural to use these types of construction because a speech is a conversation with a large number of people. As the speaker constructs her or his speech, careful selection of each word improves the chances that the audience will decode the message as the speaker

meant it. The wording precision of the wording provides less opportunity to misunderstand the message. For example, if the speaker uses the word “color,” the audience can decode that as any number of colors. If the speaker uses the word “blue,” the audience understands that as a specific element of the light spectrum.

Language Variety

The above concept reinforces how critical it is to have a large pool of words from which to construct a speech. The wealth of words which express the same concept allows the speaker to vary the words to keep the audience’s attention and interest. Any combination that the speaker can create to package their ideas will make their speech more effective. Repeating key words or finding words that rhyme to begin and end sentences can give a unique feeling to the speech. It can create a signature sound for a speech. For example, Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have A Dream” speech is constructed around such a poetic stance. President John F. Kennedy used a parallelism device in his inaugural address several times. The most memorable use is “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” No matter what device the speaker uses, the key is to individualize the presentation. The speaker might use alliteration, personification, irony, or any number of rhetorical devices. The key is to create an individual **wording signature** that marks the speech as a special event.

How can the speaker find all these devices? The best answer is to read. The effective speaker is constantly reading both fiction and nonfiction. Devote an hour or two a week to read a new magazine or explore a news Web site. Make an effort to read about different countries, especially their language and their literature. There are many times when the speaker may find a couple of words that express the exact idea that they have in mind. Outstanding speakers make time to listen to news programs and other media outlets to build that all-important vocabulary. For example, National Public Radio has numerous news programs and many cable networks specialize in current affairs programs. With the technology now available, there is no excuse for not being a well-informed speaker.

Words are critical to the decoding process. The larger the bank of available symbols, the greater the chance that a speaker will find one that expresses the

concept in a way that the audience can understand. This variety in communicative is also critical because it adds interest for the audience. Language can spike the audience's interest by creating a clever and/or a new way of expressing an old idea. For example, the speaker can borrow from television to see how language can communicate an idea. "A-1 is number one" is a slogan for a mobile-home company. It is clear and forceful. "Protect your future" is the tag line for Prudential Financial Group. It provides a precise statement of the goal for that company. The essence of the claim is that the company will provide for its client's future. "Turn on the Fun" is the theme for Best Buy. It focuses on the natural desire to have fun and claims that Best Buy is a place to enjoy yourself. These are three examples of how to use language to communicate a message in a concise and meaningful way.

Summary

As we close our examination of the impact of language on the speech process, the speaker has created a well-organized and an effectively written speech. The next step is to examine what presentation aids might be useful and how best to use them in a speech.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Why is an outstanding vocabulary critical to the effective public speaker?
- 2 How is word choice related to the encoding process?
- 3 What are some key guidelines for a speaker in using language?
- 4 How does the occasion affect the choice of language in a speech?
- 5 How does the audience's occupational experiences affect the speaker's language?
- 6 Why are concrete words more powerful than abstract language?

- 7 Why does abstract language invite confusion?
- 8 Why might the speaker use a metaphor or an analogy in their speech?
- 9 How does language affect speaker credibility?
- 10 What is the best way to improve the speaker's command of the language?

7

Presentation Aids

In an increasingly technological environment, the number of presentation aids has exploded. Deciding whether to use a presentation aid can be confusing. This chapter focuses on four key questions: What is a presentation aid? When is it appropriate and useful to use one? What types of presentation aids are available? How does the effective public speaker use these aids correctly?

Definition of Presentation Aid

A presentation aid is something that the speaker uses to enhance the understanding of the audience. The theory is that if the audience can see the idea as well as hear it, they will understand it better. An aid can range from a chalkboard, a person, a chart, or an object. This list is by no means complete and, later in this chapter, that area will be explored in more detail. Research indicates that when we both see and hear about an idea we remember about half of the message. When we include some activity related to the same idea, audiences recall seventy percent of the information to which they are exposed. Sometimes showing the concept can create interest. Television commercials that show starving children are going to be more effective than having the announcer just talk about it. Using a presentation aid can make the speaker look a bit more prepared. Presentation aids can save time by showing what the speaker means rather than having to explain it.

Decision to Use

The decision to use an aid is the key one for the speaker. Each speech brings with it the need to evaluate whether or not to use a presentation aid. There are some speeches that may not require a visual aid. For example, the speaker may be faced with an impromptu situation. They may not have time to pull all the elements of a good presentation aid together. The audience may not want the speaker to use one. An older, more traditional audience may prefer that the speaker simply describe the concept verbally. Speakers should never assume that *all* audiences want and need a presentation aid. A eulogy is another type of speech where a presentation aid may not be appropriate. Therefore, the speaker should consider a number of factors in making the decision to use an aid in a particular speech.

One of the first things the speaker should consider is the amount of time available to prepare the speech. The speaker may or may not be able to organize the aid in the time allotted. Careful consideration should be given to what type of aid is appropriate and whether the speaker can prepare it before the speech. With the powerful technology now available, using aids may be quite possible. Remember that the aid is a *supplement* to the thesis, not a replacement for it.

Study the technology resources available. Is PowerPoint a possibility? Research the environment to find out the location of screens and light. Use this information to evaluate the type of technology the speaker can use. There are still speaking situations where computers are not available. Do not make the assumption that the technology that the speaker considers normal is routine for all speaking situations. Evaluate the speaker's skill in using the presentation aid. When lecturing to a class, using PowerPoint is quite different from using a chalkboard. When speaking from in front of a chalkboard, there is a tendency for the speaker to talk to the board. PowerPoint has a tendency to divide the class's focus until the speaker learns to manipulate the slides so that the verbal comments mesh with the visual materials. Speakers should make sure the technology that they wish to use is present at the speaking location and that they are comfortable with its use.

Evaluate the audience's expectations about the use of presentation aids. Some audiences require that the speaker use them. Many businesses and professions believe that each presentation *must* have some aids. The speaker's audience

analysis should focus on these attitudes so as to meet those expectations in a reasonable way. Some audiences are low tech while others might be very high tech. Speakers should ask and never assume what an audience may want in this area.

Another criterion that can be useful is to consider using a presentation aid as an attention step or a tag line. For example, the speaker might open the speech with a dramatic piece of video to grab the audience's attention. The speaker could use a large photograph or objects to open the speech. In a speech entitled "Choosing the Right Mate," a speaker held up a portrait of himself and two children. As he held the framed picture above his head, the speaker said, "This is an old portrait of a much-younger version of myself and my two children. I have not seen my kids in over three years and I have no idea when I will see them again." The speaker went on to persuade the audience that the marriage decision is a critical one and should not be taken lightly. As this particular speaker neared the conclusion, he again raised the portrait above his head. "As I said to begin my speech, I do not know if or when I will see my children again. Please think before you take the final leap into a lifelong commitment." The simple use of the portrait to open and close the speech added an emotional power that would have not been there without the use of the aid. Another use of the presentation aid is to help with transitions. Students seem to struggle with finding an effective way to bridge from one part of the speech to the next part of the presentation. One student, whose speech was about the impact of classical music on modern music used ten-second, recognizable bites from famous composers as a way to move the speech along. Clever use of presentation aids can assist the speaker in the opening and closing of speeches as well as in the construction of the transitions in a speech.

Another key element in the decision to use presentation aids is the thesis. The aid cannot be more important than the thesis. The aid is a servant of the thesis, not the other way around. Many speakers become so focused on a "great" visual aid that the goal of the speech is confused as everyone admires the aid. Beware of the tendency to include technology for no other reason than it is the latest advance. Technology is effective only when serving the needs of the audience. If the speaker spends more time practicing the presentation aid than on the content of the speech, the speaker should make changes.

Selecting the Correct Aid

Effective speakers study the speech moment to decide if a presentation aid is needed. Secondly, they study which aid to use for each specific audience. There is an ever-expanding list of presentation aids that are available. The first decision is which type of display technology to use. Slide projection works well to put pictures on a screen or a wall. Slides are particularly effective for showing real estate and or to describe travel locations. The audience can see what they are buying or where their next vacation might be. PowerPoint is a more sophisticated version of the same idea. The key here is make sure that all audience members can see. Speaking in a darkened room reduces eye contact and, if a slide is arranged upside down, it can be quite distracting. Another common display technology is the overhead projector. The speaker can plan specific color transparencies or they can write on the projector in an impromptu manner. Computer-generated PowerPoint aids and other technologies provide a large number of methods for getting information across to the audience. The greater the complexity of the technology, the greater the chance that the technology can break down. Effective speakers check all the connections and all the software. Make certain that everything works properly and that the speaker has a complete understanding of how to manipulate the programs easily so that the focus stays on the speaker's message. It is always good to have a backup plan, in case the technology breaks down. Speakers can attach video and audio connections to add those capabilities to the presentation. At the other end of the technology spectrum, speakers can use a flip chart, which is nothing more than a large pad of paper. The speaker can prepare their notes in advance or they can write those notes as they speak. The chalkboard is useful for impromptu explanations and as a backup for other breakdowns. The main issue with low-tech display devices is the tendency for speakers to look at the board as they speak. It also requires that the speaker have legible handwriting. Another display technology is the handout. Handouts are printed materials that are shared with the audience. The main advantage of this approach is that the audience has a hard copy of what the speaker has said. It gives the audience a sense of permanence about the speaker's message. Timing is the primary problem with a handout. If the speaker gives the audience the handout during

the speech, it may serve as a distraction to the message, unless the speaker uses the material while it is shared with the audience. The general rule is to either hand out materials at the start of the speech to serve as an outline or at the end of the speech as a reminder.

Other aids are objects, pictures (including photographs, drawings, diagrams, maps, and posters), graphs, audio/visual aids, and the combination of several aids. Each speech is unique in terms of the need for a visual aid. Objects may provide just the spark an audience needs to understand a concept. The theory is that when the senses are engaged more fully, the audience has a better chance to decode the message that the speaker intends.

Building the Presentation Aid

Creating the presentation aid is guided by several key principles. The first is that the aid must be simple. Once the audience sees or hears it, there must be no doubt about the aid's message. In other words, once the audience sees or hears the aid, the meaning must be crystal clear. All aids must have the same formats. For example, if the speaker chooses a certain font for one aid, all aids must use the same font. Each aspect must be consistent so that all the visual aspects are the same. If not, the audience may be distracted by the inconsistency of the font or some other aspect of the visual. Study the impact of colors in terms of the cultural impact that they might have on an audience. Realize that in an intercultural situation, colors have different meanings. For instance, in the United States, white signifies purity and peace, while in many parts of Asia, including China and Japan, white means death and mourning. Therefore, the visual aid may be quite inappropriate for that culture. As the speaker prepares the speech, consider what presentation aids might be the best possibilities for the message. Once the decision has been made and the aid completed, the speaker needs to understand how best to use the aid in the speech.

Using the Presentation Aid

The key in using the presentation aid is to remember that the focus of the speech is the thesis, not the aid. Speakers can become so fascinated with the aid that they forget the overall message of the speech. Don't over-practice the aid and under-practice the speech. Watch the tendency with almost every aid for the speaker to turn toward the aid. In fact, weak speakers may like the visual because when the speaker looks at the aid, the audience looks also. While it is understandable that they feel less anxiety because the audience's attention is diverted, the audience loses interest as the speaker talks more to the aid than to them.

Be sure to practice the visual aid with the speech. The aid must be integrated into the overall flow of the speech. Practice maintaining eye contact with the audience as the aid is used. Display the aid only when it is to be used. After completing the use of the aid, cover the poster or turn off the video so that the aid does not distract the audience from the remainder of the speech. Prepare to give the speech without the aid, so that if there is a problem, there is a way of presenting the material without the aid. For instance, let's say the speaker is using a PowerPoint system. Halfway through the speech, the PowerPoint breaks down. The speaker calmly pulls out an overhead projector and transparencies to continue the speech. The worst thing the speaker can do is to panic and start apologizing to the audience. Maintain the flow of the speech. Audiences respond positively when a speaker has a problem and, in a professional manner, solves the difficulty. Before the speech, the speaker should make plans for such a breakdown and how they will respond. Make sure that the visual is clearly visible and stand beside the aid so that the audience has a clear view of both the aid and the speaker. Once the speaker has finished using the visual aid, it should be put away. A related idea is to avoid passing the visuals around the audience, which distracts from the speech. Practice using the aid at the appropriate time. If the speaker distributes a handout or an object to the audience, make sure that the object is used at that time in the speech and put away when completed. Otherwise, handouts should be given out at the end of the speech. If the speaker has chosen children or animals, they need to practice with them so they can learn how to make a presentation that will communicate the thesis.

The key to using all these aids is to practice. Effective speakers anticipate when problems may occur and develop solutions to those problems. An interesting

side effect is that this type of in-depth preparation makes the speaker more confident. They know that they are ready for the speech. As the speaker rehearses the speech, continual evaluation is a key element. The effective speaker must take a critical look at each thing that they do in terms of their visual aid. Keep in mind that at this stage in the speechmaking process; the presentation aid is the last step before the speaker delivers the speech. Only minor changes can be made after the speaker reaches this point.

An effective presentation aid can take an average speech and make it memorable. Develop these aids to emphasize and to clarify the thesis of the speech. The effective speaker makes an intelligent decision to use a presentation aid based on the needs of the audience, the context of the occasion, and the nature of the topic. A presentation aid that fits the speaking moment can be a valuable tool for communicating with the audience.

Discussion Questions

- 1 What is a presentation aid?
- 2 Why would a speaker choose to use a presentation aid?
- 3 Describe the impact of the audience of the decision to use a presentation aid.
- 4 What is the purpose of a presentation aid?
- 5 How can a presentation aid be used as an attention step?
- 6 What are the rules when using a presentation aid?
- 7 What are the general guidelines for creating a presentation aid?
- 8 How should the speaker respond when a presentation aid fails?
- 9 How should the speaker practice with a presentation aid?
- 10 What is the theory behind using a presentation aid?

Delivery

In theory, the presentation of a speech is seamless. The audience should not notice the way in which a speaker communicates because the speaker's delivery should serve the thesis of the speech so completely that there is complete focus on the message of the speech. The delivery is invisible, when done properly. Many speakers are overly concerned about how they look and sound instead of how the content of the speech is communicated. This chapter discusses how the speaker can develop this *invisible* delivery. There are four key criteria that audiences use to evaluate a speaker. Effective speakers understand these concepts and how to meet these perceptions.

Delivery Criteria

The effective speaker is concerned with four key ideas that audiences use to evaluate all speakers. The first attribute is the concept of naturalness. An effective speaker should appear natural to the audience. The speech should feel like a conversation among friends. Each individual in the audience should feel as though the speaker is talking one on one with each member of the audience. A key element is the lack of tenseness as the speaker talks. Audiences sense when the speaker is tense through several nonverbal clues: tense posture, random pacing, tight facial expressions, and others. Eye contact is another key element. If the speaker scans the audience without ever looking directly into the eyes of specific

individuals, the members of the audience may perceive the speaker as dishonest or weak.

A second criterion that audiences like in speakers is passion. The speaker must communicate their enthusiasm for the subject that they have chosen. Audiences are impressed with speakers who demonstrate caring. Posture is one key way that speakers reveal what they really think about a subject. The speaker's posture can send the message that the speaker does not care. For instance, a casual posture in a formal setting may distract the audience. Mumbling can cause audiences to perceive a speaker as uncaring. Looking directly into the eyes of a questioner is one way to show passion. Speakers should pick topics that excite them because people can sense a lack of commitment in a speaker.

A third criterion that audiences use to evaluate a speaker's delivery is confidence. Forceful language and powerful movement can send the message that a speaker is prepared and confident in what they have to say. Eye contact is again critical here. Appearance is a critical aspect of the confidence factor. If the speaker feels good about how they look, they project confidence to the audience. Speakers who shuffle when they are introduced can reduce their credibility. Another confidence-killer is rushing to begin the speech. It is natural to be a bit more nervous at the start of the speech. Speakers anticipate the moment and may not be sure they can make the speech work. The rush of adrenaline has to be controlled. Speakers should take control of the opening moment. Pause and organize the notes. The audience wants to know that the speaker is in control. If the speaker can reassure them, they will respond more positively to the rest of the speech.

Directness is the final criterion that audiences use to evaluate speakers. Speak directly to the audience. Speakers should refer to themselves in the first person as if the speech was a conversation between friends. Senator Robert Dole used to refer to himself in the third person: "Bob Dole has never lied to you." He was trying to be modest but the language sounds fake and a bit pretentious. Unlike writing, in which third person might be appropriate, the wrong point of view can sound stiff and unnatural.

As speakers communicate with an audience, the listeners are evaluating the delivery to assess the speech. If the speaker can master these four attributes, the speaker is seen as credible. There is a subtle shift of focus as the audience becomes comfortable with the message of the speech. The question is, How do

we use our communicative skills to create an environment that gets the audience to believe the speaker? The remainder of this chapter explores the answers to that question.

Delivery Methods

Delivery is much like acting in the sense that the speaker has a role to play. Audiences have certain expectations of the speaker. The key is to select the appropriate behaviors that create positive impressions with an audience. The other critical skill is the ability to execute these behaviors when actually giving the speech. The first key decision that the speaker makes about their performance is which method of delivery is the best for the particular speaking moment in which the speaker is involved.

There are four methods of delivery that the speaker may use. Each one has its pros and cons. Each method is better in certain situations. The first possibility is the **manuscript** speech. It is a word for word rendition of the speech. This method is best used when the message must be absolutely precise. For example, presidential speeches are analyzed carefully by both foreign and domestic audiences. The speaker may need to encode very precisely. Another situation that might call for manuscript delivery is congressional testimony. The advantage of this approach is that the speaker knows exactly what they are going to say and they have the script in front of them at all times. The challenge is make the presentation interesting. An unrehearsed manuscript speech is boring. The speaker must practice often, especially concentrating on vocal variety. It is so easy for the manuscript speech to fall into a monotone pattern. Effective speakers underline key phrases and practice emphasizing key ideas vocally. Practice eye contact, noting in the script places to pause and look at the audience. It is necessary to practice until the speaker has the speech almost memorized so that they are comfortable with it. Editing must be done word by word, as the speaker practices the speech out loud.

The **memorized** approach has the advantages of the manuscript with the added bonus of the fact that the speaker is not using notes. Audiences believe that speakers without notes are somehow more expert than those that read a

speech. The downside of the memorized speech is that it takes a long time to memorize a speech. When speakers present the speech in this form, they must have the speech memorized so that it seems natural. There is a real danger of sounding like a child reciting their letters, if the speech is not completely internalized. In addition, there is little flexibility in this format. If the audience has a question or wants the speaker to expand on a part of the speech, it is hard to do so in a memorized speech. This lack of flexibility can be resolved by asking the audience, before the speech, to hold their questions until after the speech. It is also hard to take advantage of an impromptu moment in a memorized speech because the speaker has to stop the planned speech and respond to the audience. Gestures and facial expressions can become wooden, if the speaker gets into the recitation mode and forgets that the audience has never heard this speech before.

A third method of presentation is the **impromptu** speech. This speech is given on the spur of the moment. There is no preparation of the specific message. Most often, these types of speeches occur when a speaker is in a meeting and is called on to speak. Usually, the speaker has the idea that there is a possibility that they may be called on to speak. If the speaker suspects that she or he might be called on to speak, it is time to prepare. In most situations, the speaker is called upon without any particular plan in mind. Regardless of how the speech comes about, there are a couple of key ideas that the speaker should focus on as they walk to the podium. First, the audience is going to react to the speaker's demeanor more than to what the speaker says. That's not to say that the speaker should not be careful of what they say. They should recognize that the audience's reaction to the speaker's pre-speech demeanor could impact the audience's perception. Do not overreact to this perception. Stand and walk confidently to the podium. As the speaker approaches the speaking area, decide on two or three key examples or facts that prove the central point of the speech. Keep the speech brief and to the point. It serves no purpose to wander off the subject. Present the ideas concisely and clearly. Focus on slowing down and looking at the audience. Pronunciation is a key element here.

A fourth method of presentation is the **extemporaneous** speech. It is a speech in which the speaker has notes but has not *exactly* planned what is to be said. It appears to be natural and quite conversational but this type of speaking requires thorough preparation. The speaker must know the material well enough to talk

conversationally. It must have the feel of being the *first time* the speaker has given this talk. A speaker prepares an outline with key ideas, evidence, sources, and transitions clearly planned. The speaker may not know exactly what they are going to say but they have a reasonable idea where they want to go. The outline process allows the speaker a lot of flexibility to respond to the audiences' needs. Perhaps, they have a hard time understanding the second point of the speech. In this format, the speaker has the ability to stop and expand on point two until the audience understands. If a previous speech covered some area that the speaker had planned to discuss, it is much easier to edit the repetitive material out and add new material. This flexibility keeps the speaker fresh. Another advantage of the extemporaneous speech is that because the speaker is making the speech up as it happens, their concentration has to be greater than when delivering a memorized speech. The key problem is that flexibility can also be a liability. It is easy to become sidetracked with an example or a particular story that intrigues the speaker. High school students are great at encouraging a teacher to wander off the topic. Sometimes a speaker likes a particular analogy or story. There is a temptation to expand the explanation unnecessarily. The speaker "falls in love" with the story or the example because it is one with which they strongly identify. The effective speaker must be on guard against this tendency. This potential problem can grow if the speaker has given the speech many times. Beware of losing the audience's attention by the tendency to ramble.

In some circumstances, the speaker may be told which style is required for a particular speech. The effective speaker is able to use all four approaches well. If the method is not prescribed, the speaker bears the responsibility of making the appropriate choice. If the speech is for a formal situation, perhaps a memorized or manuscript speech may be more appropriate. If the speech environment is more informal, an extemporaneous approach may be better. The speaker's audience analysis is critical in making the decision.

Vocal Delivery

Once the speaker has chosen the method of delivery, they need to understand and to decide how to use their voice and their body to communicate the message.

The next section of the chapter discusses and defines how speakers can better use these tools to communicate the message.

The paralanguage of the voice can be a powerful tool to communicate ideas for the audience. The speaker must understand how each aspect of their voice can impact the audience's perception of their message. As a speaker practices a speech, she or he should rehearse *precisely* how to use each technique to advantage. For example, **volume** is nothing more than the loudness or softness of the words. At the simplest level, if the speaker talks too softly, the audience cannot hear and there is no communication. Speakers should talk so that everyone in the room can hear easily. Two factors have an effect on how loud to talk in your speech: the size of the room and the number of people. An intimate gathering of twenty friends in someone's home does not require loud, forceful talk. Quiet and direct language is going to be much more appropriate than yelling. People judge speakers' credibility by their volume. A male speaker talking softly to a male audience will probably be judged as less credible. The same perception would greet women speaking to the same male audience. Speakers who speak too loudly, especially in a small space, are going to distract people from the message. The trick is to connect the volume changes to the structure of the speech. Notice how the volume rises slightly at the end of a question in ordinary speech. It is a subtle signal that one speaker is done and the other is about to speak. Volume change can be used as a transition from one idea to the next one. The audience picks up this subtle clue and keeps their attention on the speaker. Volume can be used to emphasize key ideas.

Pitch is the highness or lowness of the voice. In our culture, certain types of pitch engender reactions of approval or disapproval. Know the bias of the audience and make sure to avoid striking the wrong pitch. In a few cases, the speaker may *deliberately* use a certain pitch to make a point. Recognize that only experienced speakers should try such a dangerous approach. Avoid establishing a monotone pitch pattern during the speech. It is easy to fall into once the speaker feels comfortable with the situation. Decide to emphasize key points with a pitch change. It should not be a huge change but enough to signal to the audience that something unique is coming. The purpose here is to maintain interest and focus attention on the thesis. The speaker might decide to make a pitch change each time they cite evidence in the speech. Be careful of unintended sarcasm or some other tone that the speaker may be using, without being aware they are engaging

in some paralanguage subtext. If a speaker says to the audience, "I am glad to be here," but the tone or pitch is sarcastic, then the speaker has undermined the verbal statement. As with volume, use pitch as a tool to help communicate the message of the speech. It should be carefully planned.

The **rate** is the number of words per second. Rate can be distracting if it is too slow or too fast. Speaking too quickly can cause the speaker to mumble and mispronounce words. Going too slow gives the impression of uncertainty about the message and allows the audience too much time to daydream. Remember: people process words much faster than speakers can present them. Always be aware of how the audience is paying attention — be aware of glazed eyes that may mean daydreaming, or frustrated stares that signal the speaker is going too fast. Use changes in the rate to emphasize key ideas or transitions.

Pauses are stops in the speech. They are closely tied to the rate. These stops can be long or short. Use each stop to emphasize a point. In a speech about child abuse, the speaker said, "Let me show you some pictures." As the student spoke, she held up three large posters of abused children. She did not speak at all, allowing the audience to soak in the emotional power of the photographs. Speakers may have unintended pauses such as "uhm" or "ah." These fillers are going to confuse an audience that tries to decode the partial words. It is better to say nothing. Avoid these fillers. When rehearsing the speech, use an audio recording to help you analyze these errors. Speakers must maintain their composure when they forget something. Effective speakers do not get rattled when they lose their place. Smile and think quickly. The audience has no idea what's supposed to come next. Long breaks in the speech kill speaker credibility. Many times, an audience perceives an unintended pause as one planned by the speaker. Effective speakers use pauses to communicate the overall idea. As the speaker practices, they should find places to pause in order to emphasize key points in the speech.

The above factors are used to create vocal variety. In order to create interest and emphasize the thesis, effective speakers should focus on all the above areas. The use of these factors adds up to create the idea of vocal variety. Audiences want speakers to articulate the speech clearly so the audience can decode the information as the speaker intended them to understand the message. Speakers should be aware of their own patterns of speaking. Dialects and word choice certainly have an impact on the understanding of the message. Good speakers want their paralanguage cues to be consistent with the verbal messages the speaker is

sending. In a similar manner, the speaker's use of body language is critical to the success of every speech. The next section discusses how effective speakers use body language as a delivery tool.

Body Language

These nonlinguistic symbols serve as clarifying devices for the speaker. Audiences evaluate the consistency of the verbal message versus the nonverbal message. In other words, if the words send one message and the nonverbal behavior sends a different message, the audience is confused. The speaker may not even know that they are causing this kind of confusion in the audience. Sometimes, the speaker may intend to send a conflicting message. A teenager may say "yes" to a parent while rolling their eyes in disgust. They intend to send two messages: "Yes, I'll do it, but I think it's a dumb idea." Individuals in speaking situations need to carefully plan all aspects of the message.

Nonverbal language serves essentially four functions. The first is to regulate speaking order. For example, a teacher is lecturing in a class and a student raises her or his hand. The raised hand is a request to speak. We use eye contact or a pause to signal the other party that it is their turn to speak. Another function is to contradict the verbal message. A person might say "Don't call me," and wink at the same time. The receiver might decode the messages to mean that it is okay to call and for some reason the person doesn't want other people that are listening to hear the truth. Substitution occurs when the nonverbal replaces the verbal. For example, a student listening to a lecture realizes that time is almost up. They start to collect their books and shuffle their feet. The message is clear: time is up, please close the lecture and let us go. A fourth function is to emphasize. A pointing gesture is used to reinforce a verbal statement in a speech. Perhaps as a speaker verbally gives directions, she or he also illustrates with gestures. People smile and also nod their heads as a way of repeating the verbal message.

The question for the speaker is how to use these nonverbal messages to communicate effectively. Natural and appropriate facial expressions are critical to the speaker's credibility. The facial expression should be consistent with the tone of the occasion in which the speech takes place. If the speech is a joyous moment,

the facial expressions should reflect that mood. If the speech takes place in a more somber environment, the speaker should present a more formal facial expression. Most of the time, these facial reactions are the normal response to a particular situation. However, speakers should guard their facial response to a particular situation.

Gestures are used to clarify a message. The most obvious example is when someone points at an object. They can also be used to emphasize a key point. Most speakers have several characteristic gestures that they tend to use all the time. It is good to study yourself on videotape to identify these personal gestures and work on making them look natural.

Personal appearance is another key nonverbal variable. Each occupation has a dress code, as does each social situation. Dress to fit the occasion. Study the audience to determine what they perceive as appropriate dress for that occasion.

In terms of how the speaker moves during the speech, the rule of thumb is that speakers should move for a purpose. Every movement should communicate something. The speaker should be focused on how each movement helps the audience understand the thesis. Avoid random movements.

Posture is very important. Standing up straight communicates interest and power to the audience. Slouching and random pacing can only make the speaker look nervous and ill-prepared. Speakers should have a posture of "relaxed focus." Relaxed in this case means showing no stiffness or tenseness in posture or in movement. Any tenseness sends the message that the speaker is afraid and the audience does not need to know that the speaker is anxious. Focus means that the speaker is *intent* on communicating the message but is quite confident that the audience is going to understand the message. The audience needs to feel the speaker's desire to communicate with them.

The final nonverbal attribute is eye contact. It is the most important non-verbal element. Effective speakers look at specific individuals in the audience. Do not scan above their heads or at their feet. Looking in the eye of an individual audience member gives the speech the feel of a conversation. It also creates the impression of confidence, particularly in the North American culture where we are taught to believe that if a person looks you in the eye when they speak, they are telling the truth. Other cultures have different rules and speakers should research them. Another purpose of eye contact is to act as an early warning system. Aware speakers can see when the audience does not understand the

message. Confused looks, glazed-over eyes, and forced attention are all symptoms of an audience not paying attention. Looking at the audience also gets them to look at the speaker. If the speaker sees people shuffling in their seats, it may be a sign that things are not going well. Another reason to look at the audience is to avoid reading to them. Unless the speech is supposed to be read from a manuscript, there should be no reading of the speech. The speech should be a conversation with the audience, not a recitation of the speaker's ideas. So eye contact is a key method for improving each public speaking experience.

Once the speaker has created the content and the delivery of the speech, all that remains is to practice the speech. The final section of the chapter deals with how to practice in an effective way. Practice is not effective unless it results in *changes* in either the content or the delivery of the message. As the speaker practices, she or he may change a word or extend a pause. Real practice requires an ability to change and a willingness to work hard. Practice is not fun or interesting but it is the price speakers pay for creating a great speech.

Practice Techniques

The first step is to practice the preparation outline several times so that a speaking outline can be created. Add or eliminate words or nonverbal behaviors that are not effective in terms of the thesis. Remember that the point of the speech is to communicate the thesis. Everything else does not matter. Present the speech to a live audience of close friends, family, or colleagues. Solicit their feedback on the speech. What did they like? What did they dislike? What did they not understand? What language or nonverbal behavior was effective? Confusing? Ask them for suggestions about how to present the messages more effectively. Choose critics to represent as closely as possible the audience for whom the speech is intended. The speaker should keep their focus on communicating the thesis, not on the speaker's favorite line or phrase. Audiotape and videotape the speech. Focus on the verbal with the audiotape and on the nonverbal with the videotape. Time the speech under realistic conditions. If possible, practice in the actual location for the speech. If this is not possible, come as close as possible to the conditions that will be faced during the real speech. Adjust the content if the

speech is too long or too short. Finally, do a dress rehearsal of the speech to measure the success of the changes that have been made.

After the speaker has prepared as well as possible, they must present the speech. Chapter Nine deals with how the audience will listen to the speech and what barriers the speaker has to overcome in order to be successful in the speech. In addition, understanding how audiences listen to the speech can give the speaker some perspective on their success.

Listening barriers may preclude the speaker's success. Understanding that fact can help a speaker feel less anxious about the presentation.

Discussion Questions

- 1 What is the purpose of delivery?
- 2 Why is eye contact important to an effectively delivery of a speech?
- 3 What is the concept of “naturalness?”
- 4 How does random movement affect the speaker’s credibility?
- 5 Describe the manuscript speech.
- 6 What is vocal variety? How does it affect speech success?
- 7 Describe the advantages and disadvantages of extemporaneous delivery.
- 8 Define an impromptu speech.
- 9 What is paralanguage?
- 10 What are the four functions of nonverbal communication?

9

Listening

Listening is critical to the public speaker since that is the primary method for improving the speaker's ability to encode and decode. The more that the speaker reads and listens, the greater their symbol storage. In Chapter 1, we talked how the brain stores the symbols to which a person is exposed. The commonsense conclusion is that speakers that listen effectively have more symbols to use when they encode their next message. In the Internet age in which we live, the skill of listening critically to the thousands of messages to which we are exposed is essential. It is also through listening and observing other speakers that speakers can learn new speaking techniques. Effective communicators store away these concepts, ideas, and symbols until they need to express an idea. The brain isolates the key way to express the desired concept and communication is enhanced. People listen more than they do any other activity. Indeed, the effective speaker wants to listen more to gather information about their audience so they can encode a message that reaches a group of individuals more efficiently. Listening can build trust and forge strong rapport between the speaker and the audience. So what exactly is listening and how can we improve our ability to listen? Chapter 9 explores some practical ways to improve our listening and indirectly the public speaking process.

Definition

Hearing a message is not the same as listening to a message. Hearing is defined as a physical response to sound. The listener's ear responds to all sounds within its range. A person may hear an overhead fan blowing as they speak to an audience, but they can decide not to pay attention to the fan but rather to the people in the audience. Listening is the choice that people make to pay attention to a particular thing. The audience makes a conscious decision to focus on the speaker's message.

The speaker must convince the individuals in the audience that their thesis is worthy of the audience's attention. The hope is that the listeners use common sense in making their selection. In theory, a student could choose to listen to the fan mentioned earlier and block out the lecture. The speaker's challenge is to get the listener to tune into their message. Think about turning a radio dial. A public speaker is trying to get the audience to stop at their station. In other words, the speaker is competing with the other choices that the audience has in a particular situation. The choice to daydream is a station on the dial. In order to know the tastes of the audience, the effective speaker must listen.

Listening Purposes

Listeners, generally, have four purposes for listening. A wise speaker needs to know the basic purpose the audience has in listening to the speech. This knowledge allows the speaker to tailor their message to focus on that need. If the speaker is demonstrating to parents how to apply for financial aid for their children, the speaker had better not try to promote a particular university as they speak. The listeners' purpose is comprehension or understanding. If the speaker mixes persuasion into the speech, they risk alienating and or confusing their audience. Critical listening is when we evaluate what is presented. A candidates' forum is a persuasive environment, because the purpose is to allow the candidates time to persuade opinion leaders to support the candidacy. While the avowed purpose may be information, "to learn more about the candidates," the real purpose is to evaluate the individuals seeking office. Listeners are going to be

more skeptical than when they are in an informative situation. Most audiences will accept information more easily when they see the situation as informative. When the audience sees the moment as persuasive, in which the speaker is selling an idea, they will become more critical. Speakers must change their encoding to reflect this fact.

Emphatic listening is when the purpose is to support the other person. A funeral oration is built around the audience's need for emotional support. The speaker is there to uplift the audience and give direction to the moment. The speaker's attitude is a critical part of the eulogy. On these occasions, the audience wants the speaker to focus their feelings. The way that the speaker processes the death is a model for the audience. The audience is not going to be as critical in terms of evidence, but they may be quite concerned with the speaker's demeanor and word choice. The audience wants someone to tell them how to feel about the moment.

The final type of listening is appreciative listening. This kind of listening is for fun. These are mostly social situations that are pleasurable moments. The audience brings new expectations to the situation. If a person is on a blind date, pulling out a notepad to listen to their partner is guaranteed to get a strange reaction. The public speaker may be in a situation where two of these functions are operating. Messages must be adjusted to fit the different purposes that the audience brings to the speech. Regardless of the precise circumstances, the speaker has to know why the audience has to come to hear them speak.

Speaker/Listener Relationship

Speaker and listener have an interdependent relationship. The success of each side depends on the other. Listeners have a responsibility to do everything in their power to focus on the speaker's message. They should be responsible for clearing their minds of all distractions. Too many times, listeners lean back in their chairs and approach the speaking moment with the attitude that the speaker should entertain them. If they don't understand the message, it is the speaker's fault. Listeners expect the speaker to do all the work. In the same manner, speakers tend to blame audiences. Speakers have a responsibility to be

clear and interesting when they present their message. They should not play to the audience's anger but to the common sense of the audience. Speaker and listener have a contract with each other. The speaker should give all they have to the presentation of the message while the listener has an equal responsibility to focus completely on the speaker's message.

Unfortunately, the contract between speaker and listener is seldom honored. Speakers are sometimes boring and listeners are frequently lazy. This part of the chapter isolates key causes that result in poor listening. Our focus is on what the listener can do to improve their retention of the message. Typically, people retain about fifty percent of what they hear for twenty-four hours. Listeners lose half of that fifty percent in succeeding days until the original message is lost or distorted. Why do listeners do so badly?

Listening Barriers

Distractions are one of the primary ways that we lose content. There are basically two types of distractions: internal and external. Internal distractions are things that the individual is thinking about while the speech is occurring. Listeners may be replaying an argument they had with their significant other. They could be thinking about how tired or how hungry they are. There could be a test coming up in the next class. Daydreaming or fantasizing about a more pleasurable subject is a common internal distraction. External distractions are other noises in the environment. The cooling fan for the computer is an external problem. The two people talking about their social life is a distraction to the speech. Music playing next door is another distraction. As listeners try to decode the message, these distractions change their **reception** of the message. If the audience only hears a portion of the message, decoding is not effective. Listeners must give total attention if they are to decode correctly. If the speaker does not keep the audience tightly focused on the speech, distractions will cause mistake after mistake in how the audience decodes the message.

Another problem is scriptwriting. This listening flaw is usually associated with an argument. The speaker is talking, and while the listener is half-listening, he or she begins to silently compose their response to the speaker. His or her mind is

focused on encoding and not decoding. The gap between listening and speaking allows students to daydream. They can listen with part of their mind and wander within the gap. They tend to drift mentally as they sit in the room. Speaker energy can help break through the daydream. Speakers can ask questions of the audience members. The interaction of asking and answering questions keeps the speech on task. The speaker must find ways to engage the audience more fully. As a result, the listeners gets one half of the messages because they were so busy composing their response. Listeners are embarrassed when they ask a question that the speaker has already answered. Part of the problem is that people think much faster than the speaker can talk. The fastest rate for a speaker is about one hundred and fifty words per second. The human mind processes words at approximately three times that rate. Therefore, while the speaker is at point X, the audience may have already gone to three times X.

Cultural barriers are another reason the listening process breaks down. Vocabulary is a good example. Different cultures have different words for the same idea. The concept of “Confirmation” in the Roman Catholic culture is not much different from a “bar mitzvah” in the Judaic culture. While there are real differences between the ceremonies, the basic idea of celebrating a young person’s coming-of-age is similar. The speaker that knows the vocabulary of each culture has a better chance to communicate out of culture. If the speaker is not familiar with the wordset of the audience, they may use a word that has a different connotation from the one intended by the speaker. Nonverbal emblems may cause anger. For example, the Confederate flag is seen by African Americans as a vestige of racial discrimination, while Southern whites may view it as a symbol of their past. Therefore, using such a symbol is going to distract the audience from the overall message. Many Asian cultures expect speakers to bow in a particular manner to open and to close an interaction. If the speaker is unfamiliar with these norms, it can disrupt the message they are trying to present. Different generations may decode words quite differently. For example, the word poverty may mean something very different to a person who survived the Depression than to a member of Generation X. Our Depression survivor may have seen individuals, perhaps family members, die from malnutrition. A younger audience member may see poverty as a matter of relativity, in which some people don’t have as much money as before. Neither view is necessarily correct but each audience has its own perception. The effective speaker must know what those perceptions are.

and how they relate to their subject. The speaker's audience analysis should provide clues to how an audience might react to a subject. If the audience has a strong bias against gun control, a speech favoring gun control will get a negative reaction. An audience of Catholic bishops is not going to like a speech favoring a woman's right to choose. Speakers must carefully examine each demographic characteristic to anticipate possible audience reactions.

Another listening problem is gender. A man speaking about the rigors of childbirth is going to distract his audience. The female members may think that he has no basis to speak on the subject because he has not experienced giving birth to a child. A woman speaking about the impact of playing football on character development may find it tough sledding with a male audience. They are going to contend that she has no direct experience and therefore her ability to express an opinion is limited. If using a gender-driven topic, beware that the audience doesn't become upset with the speaker's point of view and ignore the content of the speech.

Listeners may have a bias for or against the speaker's topic. In either case, once the speaker states a position, the individuals in the room are either going to cheer or to frown. While they are responding emotionally to the topic, the message gets lost. The audience is so busy loving or hating that they stop paying attention to the speech. Another bias is against the speaker. If former president Bill Clinton speaks to a chapter of the Young Republicans, they are likely to respond negatively. They are immediately suspicious of his motives and all that he has to say. Their emotional reaction clouds their attention to the speech. They stop thinking and analyzing what the speaker is saying. A different reaction may occur if President Bush speaks to the Young Republicans. Their positive emotional response is as much a distraction to listening to the content as a negative response would be. The effective speaker anticipates the likely reaction to the topic and the speaker. Good listeners control their emotions so that the content does not get lost in the emotion of the moment.

Another listening barrier is the tendency to listen only for facts or the sources of the evidence. Some listeners try to process every single word that the speaker presents. Not only is it impossible to accomplish this objective, but it distracts us from the key ideas that the speaker is presenting. Listeners should keep in mind that evidence is only a means to an idea. Speakers use facts to describe a concept. Evidence is not an end in itself but a servant of the speaker's ideas. Some listeners

get distracted with the use of a particular source or expert that they dislike or like. Listeners should focus on the concepts and the ideas that the evidence is used to support. Another aspect of this problem is that listeners get so caught up trying to track all the facts that the basic concept never connects with the brain. Jumping to conclusions is another barrier to the effective listener. The listener hears something about which they have some understanding and they immediately judge the item. Sometimes, as people gain more experience in both work and social interactions, they make quick decisions before all the evidence has been presented. This dangerous tendency causes listeners to start thinking about their opinion or ideas before the speaker has completed the message. Decoding is distorted because the listeners interpret only a part of the message.

A final barrier that precludes listening success is the tendency to react to the appearance or delivery of the speaker. Many listeners focus on how the speaker looks and/or their fashion choices rather than paying attention to the content of the speech. This problem is representative of how listeners allow distractions to muddle the communication.

Listening Improvement

Ultimately, each listener should focus only on the message. Tight focus is their responsibility. If the listener gives the speaker one hundred percent of their attention, they will recall much more than the fifty percent that untrained listeners absorb. How can the listener achieve and maintain that type of attention? The final section of the chapter describes methods that listeners can use to decode more accurately.

Set a goal to listen better. A goal implies a commitment deep enough to change behavior. The listener must establish a measurable goal. Perhaps, each listener can reach for seventy- percent recall as a first goal and gradually improve toward the one hundred percent level. Each listener should discover which internal and/or external distractions impede their listening process. Perhaps one individual comes to a lecture tired or without listening preparation (paper, pen, and so on). Another person may have the tendency to judge too quickly. Listeners

should work on dealing with their problems. Effective listeners focus on the main ideas in the speech, not trying to recall every single fact. Use an outline to tighten the listeners' hold on the message. Listeners should not use notes, especially when on a date — it would be highly inappropriate, not to mention silly.

Note the purpose of each interaction. If the purpose is informational, use a note-taking strategy appropriate to that situation. If the listener is allowing a friend to vent about a personal problem, focus on their feelings and desires as they speak. Use the speaking/listening time gap to analyze their evidence. Does it really support the main idea? Is it from a reputable source? Good listening is a mental discipline. It is also critical that effective listeners suspend judgement, regardless of what the speaker is presenting to the audience. People use appearance, dialect, gender, or race to discriminate against or for a speaker. Stay focused on the speaker's message.

Watch the speaker as well as listen to the words. Remember that nonverbal clues can clarify the message. Speakers reveal their intentions and give clues to their unspoken message through their nonverbal communication. When a speaker says "thank you" in a sarcastic tone of voice, the audience knows that the speaker is not thankful. A pumping fist can reinforce the message and add emphasis. The listener must watch speakers to gauge how the speaker's non-verbal behaviors may affect their decoding. Effective listeners use all these clues to get the total decoding picture, before they interpret the message.

Effective listeners use these techniques to build a tight focus for the speech. A tight focus means that the listeners' minds are giving the speaker every single bit of their attention. The speaker may not be as effective as the audience would like, but they can overcome the speaker's faults and still get the message. A good listener allows no room for anything in their minds, except that speech. When we listen at this level, listeners build trust. People like to be heard. When students listen effectively to teachers, they encourage them to give their best to the lecture. When husbands listen to their wives, they build rapport. Effective listening connects the audience to the speaker in a powerful way.

Speakers need to listen to what their audiences tell them. Chapter 10 deals with how effective speakers can use these listening approaches to improve their next speech. The interdependent relationship between speaker and listener can benefit both sides in a dramatic way.

Discussion Questions

- 1 Why is listening important to the speaker's encoding ability?
- 2 How does listening build trust?
- 3 What is the difference between hearing and listening? How does the difference affect the public speaking process?
- 4 Describe the purpose of listening. How can the listening purpose affect a public speech?
- 5 What is the contract between speaker and listener?
- 6 What are the causes of poor listening behavior?
- 7 How does gender effect listening?
- 8 How can listening be improved?
- 9 How can the age of the audience members affect the listening process?
- 10 How can listening assist speakers in understanding the audience?

10

Speech Evaluation

Evaluating speeches empowers the student to build their own understanding of the speaking event. Students that internalize the information in this book so completely that they can analyze a speech's strong and weak points are on their way to creating their own unique style of speaking. True learning occurs when students make the information part of their lives. Learning to accept and present criticism in a professional manner builds your credibility. Others see the speaker's professionalism and can't help but be impressed.

In a more practical vein, criticism provides the speaker with concrete suggestions and ideas about ways to improve their speech. It encourages students to self-evaluate. They can learn which parts of their presentation went well and expand their use. Identifying the speaker's weaknesses helps them to understand their errors. The approach is to eliminate or modify the negative behaviors. In general, evaluation encourages students to study other speeches. The idea is to understand how other speakers do things effectively and how the speaker might apply those ideas to their next speech.

Methods of Evaluation

Evaluation is like a spiral. The speaker starts with the analysis of a speaking situation and moves through the process described in the book. Once they have

given the speech, they explore how the speech went. They discard or modify the negative and expand upon the positive for the next speaking experience. The experience of that first speech moves them down the ladder to their next starting point. They repeat the speaking process again. Evaluation assists the speaker in polishing their speaking process. As the speaker gains experience, they move down the spiral, ever closer, to their best understanding and to their best performance.

There are two ways that speeches can be evaluated. The first is the **result** paradigm. This model says that speeches should be studied to see, if they created the expected response in the audience. If the speaker gives a sales presentation, do potential customers buy the product? If a politician presents a campaign speech, do the voters respond positively to the message? President Bush delivers a nationwide address and polling organizations contact a sample of Americans to gauge their reaction to his message. Results may not always be apparent. A father lectures his child on the evils of drugs. The effect of that message may not be clearly known for several years. In addition, the speaker may never know if their message caused a positive or the negative result. Results can provide important feedback to the speaker but the effective speaker looks not only at the outcome but also at the techniques used to produce the effect.

For example, research has clearly shown that eye contact is a critical factor in building rapport with the audience. Therefore, the effective speaker needs to study how they used eye contact in a particular speech to see if its use was appropriate for that moment. Good speeches need to be organized so audiences will focus on the message. Carefully examine how the speaker put the speech together so that it can be improved for the next performance. Vocal variety is another key variable that should be evaluated in a speech. Use the evaluation process to discover places where changes in pause or rate might give the speech a clearer delivery. Many speakers use a critique sheet so they can cover all the areas that may be important to study. The best approach is to study both technique and results with an eye to improving the speech. The key is to relate the techniques to the result, so that the speaker can get a sense of why a particular speech worked or did not work in a particular circumstance.

Types of Evaluation

There are many types of evaluation. Self-evaluation is the best method, assuming that the speaker is well trained and highly motivated. When students have truly learned something, they can analyze their own speech without defensiveness. Peer evaluation is when people of equal status evaluate the speeches. For example, a teacher can pair students together and have them critique each other's speeches. The advantage of this approach is that the students are closer in age and experience. This fact helps them relate to each other better than they might with their teacher. The key here is to break up social groups when the teacher pairs students. This consideration is important because the task should be paramount and not the issue of with whom the students partner to do the exercise. Critic evaluation has the advantage of providing more precise information about the speech. A knowledgeable critic shares many positive ideas for speech improvement. The trick with this approach is to mix the positive and negative comments so as not to discourage the speaker from trying again.

An effective critic must adapt their criticism to the speaking level of the student. A more experienced student can likely accept more direct evaluation while a more novice communicator may need more positive feedback to keep them going. The critic may need to word the negative comments carefully to avoid the student perceiving that the critic is being personal. If the critic's comments are presented in an oral manner, in front of other students, it can assist other students in their speeches. However, there is a greater risk of a student taking the criticism too personally. Highly anxious students may be quite defensive about their speech. Conversely, the written critique avoids this problem since no one besides the speaker decodes the criticisms. The critic can be more blunt in that case.

Speakers need to understand that it is only through correction that improvement can take place. The key is that the critic must meet the speaker where they are in an emotional sense. Using an audiotape is an effective way to analyze how the speaker has encoded the speech. What words has the speaker chosen? Why did they choose those words? Are there words that would better communicate the idea? This mode of analysis allows the critic to stop the tape and analyze the wording as presented. This technique provides specific feedback on individual

words. The effective speaker studies each word they plan to present on the tape, so that it says *exactly* what the speaker wants to say.

The use of videotape is another way of highlighting the nonverbal aspects of the speech. One technique is to turn off the sound and watch the silent tape. First, this method emphasizes the nonverbal and helps speakers be more aware of distracting mannerisms that need to be eliminated. Perhaps the student can see where a gesture or movement may be needed to clarify the main points. Second, the video approach reminds students how profoundly interconnected the verbal and the nonverbal encoding is during a speech. A single contradictory look can dispel everything the speaker has tried to build with their words. It is also interesting to note that seeing themselves on tape may help to reduce their speech fear.

Techniques of Evaluation

The speaker must find the mix of evaluation modes that fit their temperament and their ability at a particular moment. The final section of the chapter provides some activities and techniques to actually evaluate a speech. For example, the speaker can take a speech from another person and develop their own closing to the speech. Another variation is to take a speech and delete the introduction used by the actual speaker and have the students create an introduction. After they have completed their version, show the students how the speaker actually started the speech. Using videotape or audiotape, identify the main points of the speech. The speakers can listen carefully, describing the main points of the speech. This activity is a good way to teach organization through the study of the structures of other speeches. It is a good way to get examples of transitions those speakers can use.

Another organizational benefit of having the students outline a speech is that they learn speech patterns. Speakers listen to several speeches, focusing on discovering the organizational structure of that speech. Another value of this type of assignment is that the speaker can identify methods for citing evidence and evaluate a particular source's credibility for a particular audience. Speakers should focus also on the verbal and nonverbal delivery of the highlighted speak-

ers to build awareness of common presentation errors. Another effective evaluation tool is to use a duo-critique. In this activity, one student presents their speech, as if the audience was present. One critic focuses all their comments on the content of the speech. Things like the quality and amount of evidence are things to study. Others might be organizational structure, word choice, or explanation clarity. The delivery critic only examines the presentational half of the speech. They might examine vocal variety, eye contact, and paralanguage. Another key element is the use of presentation aids. After the original speaker has finished his or her speech, each critic takes turns responding to the speech.

Another activity that seems to assist students is the preparation journal. As speakers prepare their speeches, they record their problems and feelings about the speech. A useful exercise is to take the journal through the entire process, including giving the speech and their response to the grade. The value of tracking the speaker's experience is to get the student to think about the process that they have just completed. Students are asked to write a brief paper summarizing their feelings after they conclude the entire process. They are encouraged to think through the entire process with the idea of noting areas for improvement. In addition, the focus is on those things that the speaker did *well*. Too many times, speakers focus only on their faults. It's important to encourage students and motivate them to repeat positive behaviors.

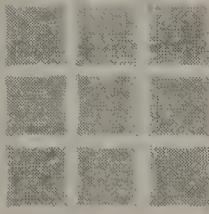
Another activity is to ask speakers to create their own critique form. Ask the students to list the things that they think make a good speech. Students can organize these ideas and then use their critique form to evaluate classroom speeches. A variation on this assignment is to do it early in the term and then repeat the exercise as the semester winds down. Speakers can compare the two sets of rubrics to see how their perception of a good speech has developed over the semester.

These ideas are designed to assist speakers in the process of internalizing the proper speaking procedures. Once students have carefully evaluated their performances, they can change the next speech. They can expand on their strengths and they can address their weaknesses. As speakers repeat the speaking process outlined in the book, students should strive to make each speech much better. Speakers should value evaluation, as a method to more clearly understand the process. Evaluation builds on the speaker's ability to listen critically to their own speeches and the speeches of others.

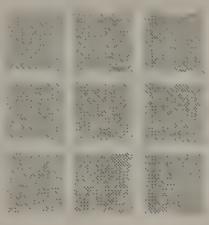
The effective speaker returns to Chapter 1 as they analyze the next speaking situation. The repetition of the public speaking cycle is critical to the future success of each speaker. As each speaker learns more about how to streamline and strengthen the public speaking process, the greater their grasp will be on how to improve their understanding of this process. In addition, evaluation increases the speaker's bundle of skills as their experience increases in various situations.

Discussion Questions

- 1 How can evaluation empower the speaker?
- 2 Describe the importance of self-evaluation.
- 3 Describe the “results paradigm” as a method of evaluation.
- 4 Why is a “critique sheet” useful in evaluating a speech?
- 5 What is the “techniques paradigm”?
- 6 What are the types of evaluation?
- 7 Why is self-evaluation so valuable to the public speaker?
- 8 Why would the use of videotape and/or audiotape assist a speaker’s improvement?
- 9 Why should the speaker focus on the things done well, as well as evaluating the speaker’s weaknesses?
- 10 What is the goal of speech evaluation?



Resources



Glossary of Terms for Communication Process

- Channel:** The means through which verbal and nonverbal images are carried from one person to another. Lightwaves allow us to receive visual images. Soundwaves allow us to receive spoken messages.
- Communication:** The process whereby meaning is exchanged by people through the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols.
- Connotative meaning:** The associated or emotional meaning rather than the literal or arbitrarily assigned meaning of a word. A personal definition as opposed to a dictionary definition.
- Culture:** The larger society in which communication takes place. Cultures establish rules and expectations which affect communication. An executive at IBM does not go to work in a sweatshirt. An assembly-line worker does not wear a suit to work. One does not usually smoke cigarettes in church. A belch after dinner is rude in Houston, Texas, but in other cultures it is a high compliment.
- Decoding:** The process engaged in by the receiver of finding a meaning for a symbol.
- Denotative meaning:** The arbitrarily assigned meaning of a word apart from its personal or emotional content. Denotative meanings are generally accepted meanings as found in a dictionary.

Encoding:	The process engaged in by the sender when selecting a symbol for use in conveying a meaning.
Environment:	The place and/or situation in which communication occurs, i.e., a large auditorium or small conference room.
Feedback:	The observable response of the sender to the receiver's message and the observable response of the sender to the receiver's response.
Meaning:	The feelings, images, and knowledge that one has gained from experience.
Message:	A set of symbols containing content, structure, and style.
Noise:	Any distraction, whether internal or external, which competes with the message for the attention of the audience.
Reality:	A combination of all meanings which comes from a person's experiences and reactions to those experiences.
Receiver:	The one for whom the message is intended. In some cases there may be unintended receivers who share unintended meaning with the sender.
Reference:	The act on the part of a sender or receiver of associating a symbol with a referent.
Referent:	That to which a symbol refers.
Sender:	The one who seeks to convey meaning from self to others through the use of symbols.
Symbol:	Something which stands for something else. A word stands for a thing, a concept, a belief, etc.
Transmitter:	The means whereby sounds are produced; the voice box, lips, tongue, teeth, etc.

Chapter 1

Coping Statements Handout

Before the Speech

1. What do I have to do?
2. Focus on the message.
3. Practice the speech.
4. Everyone has to do the speech.
5. It's just one speech.

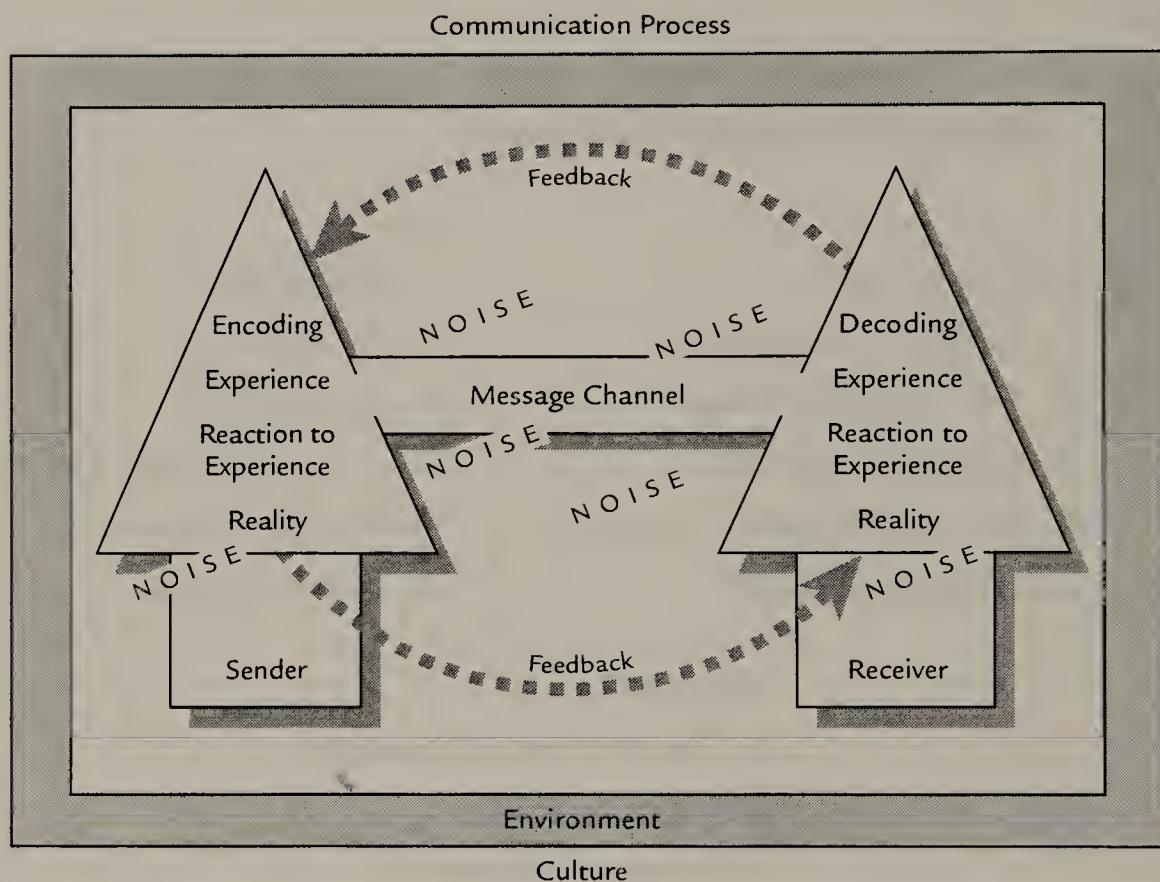
During the Speech

1. Speak slowly
2. It's going well.
3. I was afraid, but I feel okay now.
4. This isn't so bad.
5. So far so good.

After Speech

1. The next time will be easier.
2. It's going well.
3. How can I improve it?
4. I did it!
5. I wasn't as nervous as I expected.

<i>Before speech</i>	<i>During speech</i>	<i>Afterspeech</i>
<i>Task statements</i> What do I have to do? Remember to use coping statements. Speak slowly and I'll be fine.	<i>Task statements</i> Keep using coping statements. Speak slowly, it helps.	<i>Context statements</i> It wasn't as bad as I feared. It was not a big deal. Each time will get easier
<i>Context Statements</i> It's only my class. It's only one speech. We're all in the same boat.	<i>Self-Evaluation</i> How am I doing? So far so good. I've started and it was okay.	<i>Self-Evaluation</i> What did I do well? I used coping statements. I spoke. I spoke slowly. What do I want to improve next time? Remember to speak slowly and rehearse my statements.
I know as much as anyone. I can't be any worse than previously, only better.	I was anxious, but now I've calmed down. This is a little easier than I thought.	



Coping with Communication Fear

1. Nature of the Problem

- A. Natural Reaction to the prospect of being evaluated when we communicate in whatever situation. The danger is that the fear becomes so pervasive that we can't function at our best.
- B. Symptoms of the problem include: increased heart rate, sweaty palms, random gestures and movements, constricted throat muscles, loss of breathing capability, and other physical manifestations. A psychological "panic" takes control of the communicator resulting in either withdrawal from the communication and/or rapid, less than competent communication execution. A perception that perfection is required and a nearly paralyzing feeling of fear.

2. Sources of the Fear

- A. Inadequate preparation and practice.
- B. Insufficient or negative communication experiences.
- C. Unrealistic goals.
- D. Inaccurate perception of the audience.
- E. Negative self-talk
 - 1. self-criticizing.
 - 2. self-pressuring.
 - 3. misdirected concerns.
 - 4. fault exaggeration and perception of audience awareness of errors.

3. Solutions for Communication Apprehension

- A. Objectification—talk about the fear.
- B. Cognitive restructuring—change our ideas about the activity.

- 1. Replace negative expectations with positive ones.
- 2. Visualize successful completion of the communication.
- 3. Focus on the message, not evaluation of the audience.
- 4. Compensation—Ignore nonverbal and verbal evidence such as trembling hands, dry mouth, shortness of breath, etc.
- 5. Channel excess energy
 - a. use visual aid.
 - b. pre-speech physical activity such as walking or exercise.
 - c. rehearse.
 - d. repression.
 - e. system.
 - f. summarize and close, if you forget.

- C. Set realistic goals—expect what can be reasonably done in the available time.
- D. Constructive self-talk—sell yourself on the positive nature of the speech.
- E. Understand that the audience wants you to succeed.
- F. Don't procrastinate.

4. Summary

- A. Focus on the story for the audience.
- B. Expect positive results.
- C. Build on one positive experience to change the "fear" habit.
- D. Confront the need to discipline your attitude in a positive direction.

Relaxation Exercise

Purpose

To help students overcome speech fear.

Procedure

1. Explain the concept of positive coping statements.
2. Divide the class into three groups.
3. Assign each group to develop coping statements for:
 - A. Before the speech.
 - B. During the speech.
 - C. After the speech.
4. Have each group report on the ideas that they have generated.
5. Apply coping statements to a speech situation.

Teacher Preparation

1. Develop coping statements.
2. Develop applications of these ideas with the speaker.

Example of Communication Exercise

1. Purpose: To reinforce the lecture content through the application of the communication model.
2. Procedure
 - A. Students are to prepare a report in which they describe an example of communication.
 - B. Students should describe an experience that is *not* communication.
 - C. The presentation is no longer than three minutes. The students will apply the model discussed in the lecture to two situations of their choice. They must identify the attributes of each circumstance that make it communication in one situation and not communication in the other.
 - D. The presentation is graded based on the quality of the presentation and the accuracy and the justification for each example. Students should prepare notes but should not be allowed to read the speech to the class.
 - E. Each student will present their report to the entire class. The teacher provides a critique in which they apply the model to the student's analysis of the experiences.
3. Teacher Preparation
 - A. The teacher should prepare three examples of communication and three examples of non-communication.
 - B. The students should have a copy of the model. (See model).
 - C. Allow the students two or three days preparation time.

Chapter 2

Audience Feedback Exercise

Purpose: To provide the speaker with feedback from audience members.

Instructions: Fill in the following blanks and return this form to the speaker.

Speaker's Name: _____ Topic: _____

1. In my opinion, the strengths of the introduction were:

2. The speaker did /did not establish common ground with the audience because:

3. It seemed to me that the speech was/was not clearly organized because:

4. What I liked about the visual aids and/or supporting material was:

5. What I think would improve the visual aids and/or supporting material is:

6. Logical and emotional appeals were/were not effective because:

7. The speaker did/did not establish credibility because:

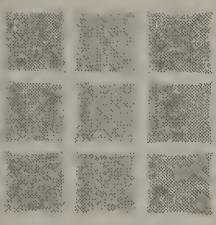
8. I think the strong points of delivery were:

9. I think delivery could have been improved by:

10. I think the best thing about the conclusion was:

11. The strengths and weaknesses of the conclusion were:

12. Overall, what I liked best about the speech was:



Audience Analysis Exercise

Name: _____

Purpose: To conduct a topic-specific analysis of the audience for your speech.

Instructions: Fill in the first blank with an appropriately worded specific purpose statement for your speech. Then circulate this sheet among the members of your class. Ask them to indicate their attitudes toward your specific purpose statement by making a hash mark (| | |) in the appropriate box.

Specific Purpose:

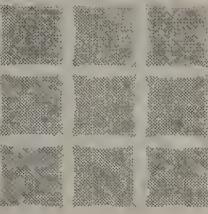
Audience Attitudes

Audience members: Please make a hash mark (| | |) in the appropriate box to indicate your attitude toward the specific purpose statement that appears above.

Attitude	Mark the Appropriate Box
Hostile: I am moderately to strongly hostile to this specific purpose.	
Apathetic: I do not really have strong feelings for or against this specific purpose.	
Friendly: I am moderately or strongly in favor of this specific purpose.	

Using The Results

If you have a *hostile* audience you will need to concentrate on justifying why your ideas are better than opposing ideas. If you have an *apathetic* audience you need to focus your speech on explaining why the issue you are discussing is important for the audience; you need to motivate them to care. If you have a *friendly* audience you need to concentrate on making your audience feel more strongly about your topic.



Class Demographics Tally Sheet

Using information gathered from the Demographic Audience Analysis Exercise on the preceding page, tally the demographic information for the class.

1. Class Size:

The class consists of ____ students, ____ instructors, and ____ lab instructors.

2. Sex:

The class consists of ____ males and ____ females.

3. Age Categories (number of people in each category):

____ 18-24 ____ 25-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____ over 50

4. Ethnic Backgrounds (list ethnicity and number of people):

Ethnicity _____ Number _____ Ethnicity _____ Number _____

Ethnicity _____ Number _____ Ethnicity _____ Number _____

Ethnicity _____ Number _____ Ethnicity _____ Number _____

5. Classification (number of people in each category):

____ Freshman ____ Sophomore ____ Junior ____ Senior ____ Other

6. Majors represented (list majors and number of people):

Major _____ Number _____ Major _____ Number _____

7. Group Types (list type of group and number of people):

Group _____ Number _____ Group _____ Number _____

Audience Analysis Exercise

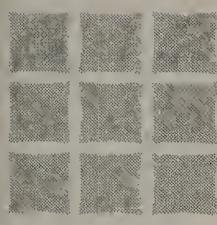
Purpose: To assist students in analyzing the audience.

Procedure

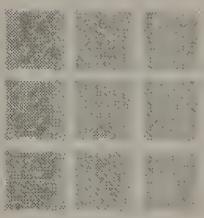
1. Give the students the following scenario. The band has been invited to play in the Rose Bowl parade. They need fifty thousand dollars to pay for the trip. You have been assigned to speak to the local Kiwanis club. You are to request a donation from the club. You are to persuade them that they should donate.
2. Divide the class into groups.
3. Assign the Groups to:
 - a. brainstorm what information they would need to know before speaking. Make a List.
 - b. divide list into demographic and attitudinal categories.
 - c. report to the class on their findings.
4. Discuss the purpose and value of knowing the audience before you speak.
5. Describe sources of information about the audience-survey and or observation.

Teacher Preparation

1. Type the scenario and group assignment (see Procedure 3 above). Make appropriate numbers.
2. Prepare audience analysis to use as a sample.



Chapter 3



Brainstorming

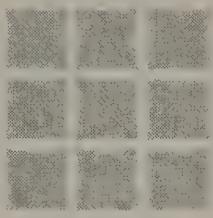
Purpose: To help students discover possible topics.

Procedure

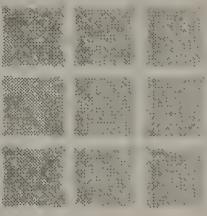
1. Assign students to watch news programs such as Network News, CNN World News, This Week, Meet the Press, Sixty Minutes, or Dateline.
2. Assign the students to read a recent issue of *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *US News and World Report*.
3. Students are to list the topics discussed in each program and or described in each magazine.
4. Lead a discussion about the nature of these topics. Why are they popular?
5. Have students do a self-inventory
 - a. What are their interests?
 - b. What hobbies?
 - c. What occupations are represented in their family?
 - d. What values do they hold dear? Why or Why not?
 - e. What sports and or activities do they participate?
6. Add the inventory list to media list to create a master list of topics. Have the students pick the three topics they like most.
7. Assign the students to develop preliminary main points of each of their topics.
8. Collect the result of #7 for use later in the process.
9. Talk about the importance of considering each speaker's interest and knowledge. Discuss the use of personal and media sources to generate possible topics.

Teacher Preparation

1. Create a list of possible topics to serve as examples. Do preliminary outlines on these topics.
2. Type a handout containing questions from Procedure #5 and material from Teacher Preparation step #1.



Chapter 4



Evidence Videotape Assignment

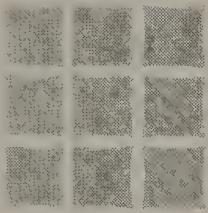
Purpose: Assist students in understanding the uses and types of evidence.

Procedure

1. Review the uses and types of evidence.
2. Instruct the students to identify the uses and types of evidence used in the speech.
3. Show a videotape of extemporaneous speeches.
4. As the tape plays, the instructor should stop the tape and identify:
 - a. different types of evidence—testimony, statistics, examples, etc.
 - b. appropriate citation of evidence.
 - c. quality and quantity of evidence for each point.
 - d. signposts for evidence, “As reported in,” etc.
5. Use three speeches to illustrate the idea.
6. Apply these ideas to their upcoming informative speech. Instruct them to model the evidence behavior exhibited by these speakers.
7. Talk about the importance of source citation to build credibility.

Teacher Preparation

1. Obtain videotapes from National Forensic League, University Interscholastic League, and the National Federation.
2. View the videotape before the students to identify examples of each type and each use. All the speeches should be used. The idea is to show the use of evidence in a VARIETY of situations.
3. Review the uses and the types of evidence definitions.



Research Assignment Example

Thesis: Provide the audience with tools to improve their speaking effectiveness.

Sources:

Aristotle, edited by Spencer Milicent, "Principles of Rhetoric," published by Mayfield Press, in 1991.

Steven and Mary Beebe, "Public Speaking: An Audience-Centered Approach," published in 1994 by McGraw-Hill.

Tom Entinger and Steven Monroe, "Persuasive Speaking," published in 1958 by Harcourt-Brace.

Stephen Toulmin, "The New Rhetoric," published in 1958, by New York University Press.

Ken Erickson, "Stage Fright in Public Speaking," published in May, 1994 in Communication Education.

Information:

"Preparation is the first goal of the public speaker."

"Argue that the more you prepare, the less fear you will experience."

"Rehearsal decreases the perception of fear by the speaker."

"The more the speaker practices, the less stress they feel about speaking."

"Extensive and varied practice was shown to significantly reduce the stage fright that most speakers experience."

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE IS ONLY AN EXAMPLE.

You will want more information and more sources. The handout is an attempt to show you how to format the research assignment. Appropriate bibliographic data is expected for whatever sources that you decide to use.



Evaluating Internet Sources

Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Authority

Who is the author and what are his/her credentials? Is the author associated with a well-known institution or organization? Are references given to support the information? Does the site provide a way to contact the author or creator?

2. Purpose

Was the site created to inform, to entertain, or to persuade you to buy a product or an idea? Who are the investors or backers of the site? Does the site have advertising and could this influence the content? What information is not given and why?

3. Design of the site

Does the site load quickly? Is it easy to read and to navigate between pages and topics? Are the graphics distracting?

4. Links

Are the links working? Are the links carefully chosen?

5. Currency

Is the information up-to-date? When was the site last updated?

6. Accuracy

How does the Internet source compare to other sources of print and electronic information? Are there spelling and grammar errors?

7. Depth/Treatment/Scope

Is the treatment too shallow for college-level work? Does the information in the site apply only to a certain time period or to a certain country? Are all aspects of the subject covered?

8. Usefulness

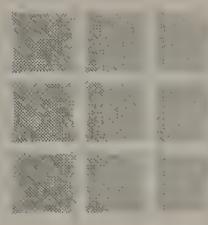
Does the site have actual information or is it a collection of links? Is there a search function included with the site? Will the site help meet your information needs?

9. Audience

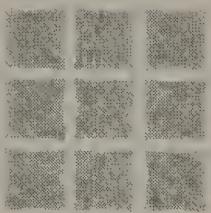
Is the site written for experts, specialists, educators, the general public, or children?

10. Recommendations

Has the site been reviewed and recommended by a reliable source?

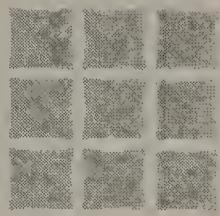


Chapter 5



Outline Matching Assignment

1. Divide Class into groups.
2. Place information from the “Sample Outline” and the “Making Your Speech Work” on cards.
3. Using the cards, each group should match the “Sample Outline” to the “Making Your Speech Work” outlines.
4. Groups match the concept from the “Sample Outline” to the example from the “Making Your Speech Work Outline.”
5. Procedure
 - A. Explain game.
 - B. Each group gets ten minutes to match the outlines.
 - C. After the first ten minutes, evaluate each group’s attempt.
 1. Match must be **100% correct**.
 2. Each group that completes the puzzle correctly gets a five-point bonus on the organization test.
 3. If none of the groups get the match, give the class another ten minutes.
 - D. Repeat process until a group gets the match right or class is over.
 - E. Discuss the impact on Communication.



Outline Format

Introduction

Attention Step

Thesis

Preview

Transition

Body

State

Evidence

Explain

Summarize

Transition

Conclusion

Sample Outline

Introduction

1. Attention step—a rhetorical device to focus attention
2. Thesis of speech—goal for audience.
3. Preview—list of main points
4. Transition to the first point.

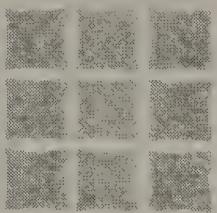
Body

1. *State the point clearly.* Label the idea concisely and briefly.
2. *Present evidence.* Author, date, and source must be provided with each piece of evidence. You must give at least two pieces of evidence for each point. You may give more than two pieces of evidence. The bibliographic information must be presented orally as each piece of evidence shared with the audience.
3. Explain the point.
 - a. show how the evidence proves, illustrates, or demonstrates your point.
 - b. translate any unfamiliar words into terms the audience can understand.
 - c. connect the main point to the audience's needs or desires as it relates to the speech.
 - d. make appeals to the audience to either be informed or be persuaded depending on the speech's purpose.
4. *Summarize key ideas covered within that main point.*
5. *Create a transition to the next point or to the conclusion.* These words should establish the connection between the main point just completed and the next part of the speech.

Repeat the above five steps for each main point.

Conclusion

1. *Review the main points* presented in the body of the speech. Use language different from the preview for the review.
2. *Restate the thesis* in a memorable way. Use different words to present the same concept.
3. *Present appeals to motivate* the audience to respond appropriately to the speech's goal. Suggest action.
4. *Frame the speech* by referring to the attention step. Create a specific *tag line* to summarize the speech. Provide a definite ending for the audience.



Making Your Speech Work

Introduction

1. Attention Step—description of student trembling in anticipation of giving a speech.
2. Thesis—Provide the audience with tools to improve their speaking effectiveness.
3. Preview—preparation and practice.
4. Transition—“In order to control the feelings of speech fear, you must prepare.”

Body

1. State—Preparation is the key to decreasing fear.
 2. Evidence—According to Aristotle in his book *Rhetoric*, first published in ancient Greece, “Preparation is the first goal of the speaker.” Beebe and Beebe in their book *Public Speaking* published in 1994, argue that “the more you prepare, the less fear you will experience.”
 3. Explain—These two experts indicate that a reduction of fear results from preparation. Your confidence will grow as you work on the speech.
 4. Summary—More preparation reduces fear in public speaking situations.
 5. Transition—“Speaker practice, like preparation, can decrease speech fear.”
-
1. State—Practice will reduce stage fright.
 2. Evidence—Monroe and Entinger in their book *Persuasive Speaking* describe the relationship: “Rehearsal decreases the perception of fear by the speaker.” Stephen Toulmin in his book *New Rhetoric* draws the same link: “The more the speaker practices, the less stress they feel about speaking.” Ken Erickson in a *Communication Education* article, published in 1994, explains that “extensive and varied practice was shown to significantly reduce the stage fright that most speakers experience.”
 3. Explain—The repetition of potential messages builds self-confidence. Changing the practice method helps the speaker hone each part of the speech.

continued

4. Summary—Stage fright can be reduced by varied and complete practice.
5. Transitions—Having explored two key methods to reduced speech fear, we need to review what we have learned.

Conclusion

1. Review main points—Taking time to plan and rehearse your presentation will reduce speech stress.
2. Thesis—It is my hope that I have provided two techniques to decrease speech fear.
3. Appeal—if you will apply these solutions to your speech, you can channel these emotions into the act of communicating with your audience.
4. Tag Line—Rather than quaking in fear when asked to speak, you will be calm and confident.

Scrambled Outline Exercise

On the following pages you will find information about treating a snake bite. The information is scrambled. Your task is to arrange the information so that it fits the organizational pattern detailed below on this page. Insert the letter for each item of the scrambled speech.

Introduction

- _____ Narrative (begins)
- _____ Narrative (continues)
- _____ Narrative (continues)
- _____ Relates topic to audience
- _____ Speaker establishes credibility
- _____ Thesis
- _____ Preview
- _____ Transition to body of speech

Body

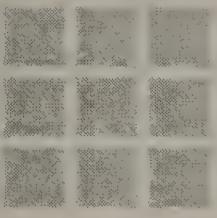
- _____ First Main Point
 - _____ Explanation
 - _____ Explanation
- _____ Second Main Point
 - _____ Explanation
 - _____ Explanation
- _____ Third Main Point
 - _____ Explanation
 - _____ Explanation
 - _____ Explanation

Conclusion

- _____ Summary statement
- _____ Reference back to introduction
- _____ Concluding appeal to the audience

Scrambled pieces:

- p:** There are three fundamental steps to follow in the treatment of a snakebite:
 - A tourniquet must be applied between the wound and the heart.
 - Incisions must be made over the fang marks.
 - A sizable amount of blood must be drawn out of the surrounding area.
- r:** The final step in treating a snakebite is to encourage a sizable loss of blood from the infected area.
- s:** Steve Jackson is an amateur herpetologist, and last summer he conducted a collecting trip for the reptile department of the Highland Zoo in Pittsburgh. He was climbing an exceptionally steep slope to the base of a large rattlesnake den in central Pennsylvania. The day had been long and very hot, and Steve was beginning to tire.
- b:** I would like to show you the basic steps to follow in the treatment of a poisonous snakebite.
- m:** Immediately following a snakebite, a tourniquet must be applied to prevent the flow of venom into the circulatory system of the body.



Speech Preparation Checklist

Name: _____

Class: _____

Type of presentation: _____

Research—20 Points

1. Thesis statement properly structured. "At the end of the speech the audience . . ."

Minimum 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Maximum

2. List of five sources with complete citations.

Minimum 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Maximum

3. Evidence: Copies or actual sources present in the classroom on the day.

Minimum 1 2 3 4 5 6 Maximum

Outline—20 Points

1. Outline format followed precisely.

Minimum 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Maximum

2. Label outline clear, clean, and neat.

Minimum 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Maximum

3. Speech content matches format.

Minimum 1 2 3 4 5 6 Maximum

Audiotape Assignment—10 Points

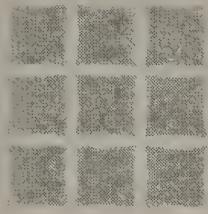
Total preparation points possible is 50.

Total preparation points earned ____.

Performance points possible is 50.

Total performance points earned ____.

Final grade ____.



External Pattern Exercise

Purpose: students in identifying and using patterns of speech organizations.

Procedure

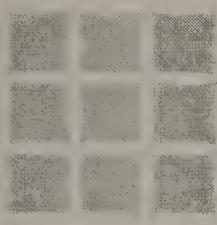
1. Review the types of patterns for the students.
2. Instruct the students to identify the speech patterns from the videotape speeches.
3. Show videotape to the students.
4. As the tape plays, the instructor should stop the tape and identify:
 - a. the patterns used by the speaker in each speech
 - b. discuss the characteristics of each major pattern.
 1. Topical—types and categories.
 2. Chronological—time and sequence.
 3. Spatial—area and distance.
 4. Problem/Solution—establish need, provide plan.
 5. Causal—cause/effect.
5. Use five speeches to illustrate the pattern.
6. Apply these patterns to their upcoming informative speeches. Instruct them to model their speeches on the organizational structures used on the videotape.
7. Talk about the need to organize speeches to enhance listening.

Teacher Preparation: Repeat instructions from the “Evidence Videotape Assignment.”

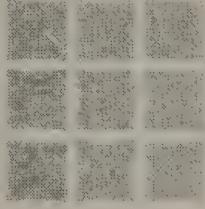


Outline Matching Assignment

1. Divide Class into groups.
2. Place information from the “Sample Outline” and the “Making Your Speech Work” on cards.
3. Using the cards, each group should match the “Sample Outline” to the “Making Your Speech Work” outlines.
4. Groups match the concept from the “Sample Outline” to the example from the “Making Your Speech Work Outline.”
5. Procedure
 - A. Explain Game.
 - B. Each group gets ten minutes to match the outlines.
 - C. After the first ten minutes, evaluate each group’s attempt.
 1. Match must be **100% CORRECT.**
 2. Each group that completes the puzzle correctly gets a five point bonus on the organization test.
 3. If none of the groups get the match, give the class another ten minutes.
 - D. Repeat process until a group gets the match right or class is over.
 - E. Discuss the impact on communication.



Chapter 6



Audiotape Language Analysis

Purpose: To teach students the effective use of language.

Procedure

1. The students listen for appeals and stylistic devices introduced in the lecture. Ask the students to record specific language that represents appeals. It may be necessary to allow the students to hear the tape multiple times. Once the students have written several examples move to step two.
2. Student are asked to identify the appeals and devices used in the tape.
3. Students will be asked to identify concrete and abstract language. Analogies and similar devices should also be identified
4. The students will assign meanings to the tape examples.
5. The teacher will lead a discussion highlighting the difference between written and oral language. The students will rewrite one of the audio advertisements for a newspaper. The students will read this material aloud, to compare the two mediums.

Teacher Preparation

1. Tape twenty minutes of radio commercials.
2. Listen to the tape and find the appeals within the messages. It may take multiple sessions to identify the meanings inherent in the audiotapes. The instructor should complete the exercise *before* having the students perform the activity.
3. Each instructor should assign meanings so that the teacher can measure the students' success.



Commercial Nonverbal Analysis

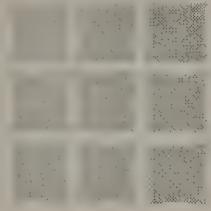
Purpose: To assist student in understanding how to decode nonverbal messages.

Procedure

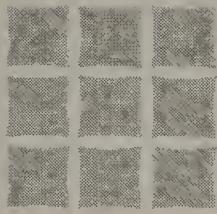
1. The students should view the commercials, focusing their attention on recording examples of nonverbal communication in the tape. Once they have seen the tape once, show them the tape a second time.
2. The students should take their list of nonverbal examples and match them with the functions discussed in the lecture.
3. Each student, without conversation with other students, should assign meaning to each nonverbal expression.
4. The teacher should lead a discussion in which the students orally describe the meanings of each message. The focus should be on how these messages are used to persuade the audience.

Teacher Preparation

1. Tape twenty minutes of television commercials.
2. View the tape and identify nonverbal messages. It may take multiple viewings to find all the messages. The instructor should complete the exercise *before* having the students perform the activity.
3. Each nonverbal message should be assigned a meaning so that the instructor can use it as measure of the student responses.



Chapter 8



Public Speaking Analysis

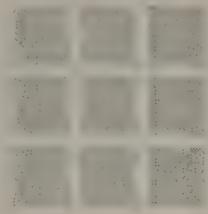
Purpose: To teach students the impact of nonverbal communication in a speech

Procedure

1. Explain to the students that the tape contains several speeches and that the focus is how nonverbal communication is used. Briefly review the keys from the lecture.
2. Instruct the students to select one gesture used in the speech to analyze for their paper. Explain that they are to write a one-page paper describing what the gesture “means” in the context of the speech.
3. Show the speech three times. Tell the students that it doesn’t matter if more than one student picks the same gesture.
4. Without any discussion, have the students write a short paper decoding the gesture. Allow them to use the rest of the class and collect the assignment at the end of the class. Explain that the student should discuss the psychological, physical, social, and temporal aspect of the environment in which the communication occurs.
5. During the next class, divide the class into groups and have them discuss their examples. Moderate the discussions as you move among the groups. The purpose is to show students how one gesture can have “multiple” meanings.
6. After the groups have completed their work, summarize the exercise by highlighting that nonverbal communication is context driven, expressive, and ambiguous. Its nature requires careful decoding.

Teacher Preparation

1. Obtain tape from National Forensic League, University Interscholastic League, or Texas Forensic Association.
2. Preview each tape and pull examples of the various types of nonverbal gestures and expressions to use as evidence in step 6.



Analysis of Videotape Speeches

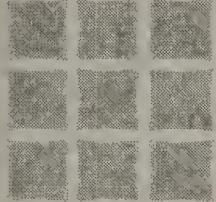
Purpose: Assist students in critiquing speeches. Reinforce the lecture on delivery.

Procedure

1. Review key principles of delivery.
2. Play the videotape speeches for the class.
3. Instruct the students to find positive and negative examples of delivery.
4. Have the students discuss the examples that they have gleaned from the videotape.
5. Brainstorm applications to their speeches.

Teacher Preparation

1. Obtain speech videotape from University Interscholastic League, National Forensic League, and or the National Federation.
2. Preview the tape and find five examples of negative and positive behavior.
3. Develop possible applications.



Delivery Improvement

Purpose: To improve verbal and nonverbal presentation.

Procedure

1. Audiotape version—will improve pronunciation, allows a line-by-line analysis of word choice, grammar, fluency, and rate.

- A. Student should record one of their speeches.
- B. Student listens alone and writes a one-page self-evaluation.
- C. Play tape for the entire class.
- D. Teacher should critique:

The instructor will stop the tape as they identify an error. The teacher should provide suggestions for improvement, specific reasons why the behavior is incorrect, and offer analysis to assist the student in changing their communication patterns.

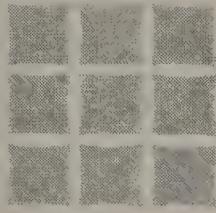
2. Videotape version—will improve awareness of eye contact, movement, posture, and gestures.

- A. Students will videotape their speech in class.
- B. Student watches the tape and writes a one-page self-evaluation.
- C. Play tape for the entire class.
- D. Teacher should critique:

The instructor will stop the tape as they identify an error. The teacher should provide suggestions for improvement, specific reasons why the behavior is incorrect, and offer analysis to assist the student in changing their communication patterns.

Teacher Preparation

1. Provide enough time to critique each student completely.
2. Provide student with appropriate equipment and materials to make the recordings.
3. Allow the student a week lead-time to record the speeches before the critique students.



Making/Acknowledging Introductions

Purpose: Give students experience making and accepting introductions.

Procedure

1. Explain:
 - a. Elements of the introduction—attention step, identify personal and professional attributes of the speaker, refer to the occasion, invite speaker to the speaking area, lead applause, and welcome speaker to the podium. Shake hands.
 - b. Speaker responsibilities—give introducer background and topic information, provide setup information for the speech, listen to introduction intently, approach lecture when invited, and thank the person doing the introduction.
2. Provide a scenario for the speech—You are a member of the Rotary Club or some other service or professional organization. The speaker has been invited to talk about the club's possible involvement in a charity telethon.
3. Divide the class into pairs.
4. Assign one person in each dyad to be either the speaker or the introducer.
5. Instruct the students to write an introduction based on 1(a) above. The student playing the role of the speaker should prepare a response.
6. Allow each pair to practice making the introduction and have the speaker respond to the introduction.
7. Arrange the class so that a podium or lecture is set at the front of the room.
8. Each dyad will present their introduction and acceptance to the class.
9. The teacher will offer an oral critique.
10. The students can repeat the exercise, exchanging roles so that each student can experience both sides of the interaction.

continued

Teacher Preparation

1. Create a handout covering procedure step 1.
2. Write two or three scenarios for use in the exercise.
3. Review key delivery techniques.



Nonverbal Observation Checklist

1. Repeating

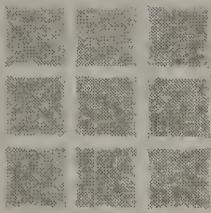
2. Substituting

3. Complementing

4. Accenting

5. Regulating

6. Contradicting



Suggestions for Rehearsing Your Speech

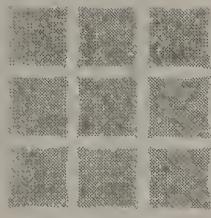
Practicing or rehearsing your speeches before you deliver them in class is absolutely essential. Exactly how you practice and how many times will vary from person to person. Usually, speakers should practice out loud, standing up, three to six times before presenting the speech to the audience. But regardless of how and how many times you rehearse, here are some tips that can help:

- As you rehearse, listen for language problems such as jargon or slang that does not reflect audience analysis.
- Exaggerate your nonverbal gestures while practicing the speech. You will find that they will soon become natural.
- Practice your eye contact. Pretend that the audience is in front of you. Practice your eye contact by moving your eyes naturally around the room.
- Time your speech during rehearsal. Remember to time your speech every time you practice because adjustments to speeches will alter timing. Remember also that you may tend to talk faster in front of the audience. Allow for that.
- Allow time for adjustments. While practicing you are also polishing your speech, so start practicing early.
- Never write the speech out word for word and then either read it aloud or memorize it. You must use extemporaneous delivery for both speeches in this class.
- Practice pauses. You may want to indicate on your notes cards where pause. The more familiar you are with your speech the more evident the places for pauses will become.
- You may want to shift your position for the main points. That is, some speakers will move to the right for the first point, center for second, and left for third. Most introductions and conclusions are presented in center positions. If you decide to do this in your speech, practice the movements.
- Give yourself a dress rehearsal. This will allow you to adjust your choices of clothing if necessary. You are more confident of yourself when you feel like you look good.
- Beware of “uh’s”, “um’s”, “you know’s”, like’s”, “ehr’s”, and “whatever’s”.

Following those suggestions will not guarantee that you will give an outstanding speech. But failing to follow them will almost guarantee that you will give a bad one!



Chapter 9



Listening in Interactions

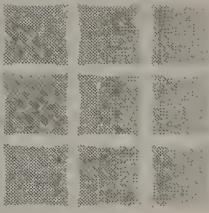
Purpose: To assist students in learning how to listen in interpersonal interactions.

Procedure

1. Give the students the following scenario: A teenager wants to extend their curfew for an additional hour on weekends. They are discussing the request with their parents in the living room.
2. Divide the class into two groups. One group will play the role of the parents. While in the group, they are to list as many reasons as possible to maintain the present hours. They should anticipate the child's likely arguments and prepare responses to those potential arguments. The second group will prepare the child's arguments and anticipate potential parental arguments. They should develop information to support their ideas.
3. Each group will select one person to portray the parent and the child.
4. The two students will role-play the scenario for the class. Allow the role play to continue for no more than fifteen minutes.
5. The class will listen to the interaction, focusing on two key things as they watch the interaction: key points made by each participant in supporting their claims and barriers to effective listening that occurred during the episode.
6. After the interaction is completed have the students identify the main points presented by each side. Secondly, describe barriers that decreased or increased the effectiveness of the communication. Discuss how these problems could be overcome. Refocus their attention on the lecture material.

Teacher Preparation

1. Type a written copy of the scenario giving some background details on the situation.
2. Identify the key ideas from the interaction (see step 5 above). Describe the listening barriers that you saw as the speech unfolded.
3. Prepare discussion points for the debriefing sections.



Listening Assessment

Purpose: To assist the students' ability to decode information.

Procedure

1. Divide the class into dyads.

2. Give the students fifteen minutes to complete the following task:

One student will stand at the board. This person will follow the directions given by a second student. One student will direct the artist in the creation of a geometric figure.

The listening student can ask questions but cannot face the director. Instruct the director to provide specific details and positive feedback to assist the artist in creating the drawing.

3. The instructor should start all the groups at the same time. As the dyads work the puzzle, the teacher should make observations about problems that the students experience. The teacher should count down the time as it expires. Evaluate the success of each pair. How close did they come to accurately reproducing the figures? If not, where did the communication break down? What things went well? What factors hurt the listening process? How could the process be improved?

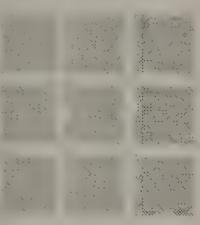
4. Discuss with the students other situations in which listening behavior is critical and how these circumstances effect the success of communication. Engage them in a dialogue about the process.

Teacher Preparation

1. Create and duplicate a geometric figure or drawing for the students to use for the exercise.

2. Get access to a timer.

3. Practice the exercise *before* the students become involved.



Listening in Various Contexts

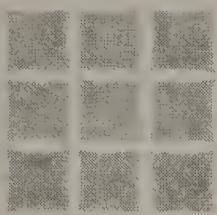
Purpose: To assist students in identifying main ideas.

Procedure

1. Setup communication source (see list in teacher preparation section).
2. Instruct students to list the thesis and the main ideas from each speech. Tell them to focus only on the supporting points and the central ideas. Discuss behaviors that enhance the listening process.
3. Students listen and list thesis and main ideas on a sheet of paper.
4. As the students listen, watch for factors that preclude effective listening.
5. After the communication is complete, review the students' responses versus the correct thesis and main points.
6. Discuss the reasons why the students may have failed to decode the information correctly. Apply the discussion the content about listening process.

Teacher Preparation

1. Listen to the tape before the students hear the tape so that you can have the correct information to use in the discussion phase.
2. Arrange the speech. This may require that you bring a live speaker to the class, an audiotape, or a videotape. Make sure that all the equipment works and all the connections are securely attached.
3. Possible sources include: the teacher's lectures, other teachers in your building, videotaped speech from UIL, TFA, or the National Federation. They also provide audiotapes. The teacher can tape programs from TV programs like Biography, CNN's Impact, and other programs on C-Span or CNN.



Listening in Media Situations

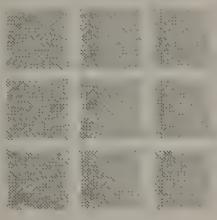
Purpose: To teach students how to listen in media situations.

Procedure

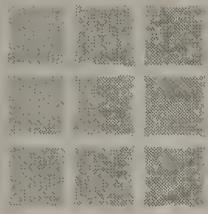
1. Review key ideas from the lecture about listening solutions.
2. Have the student view television programs such as *Biography*, *Sixty Minutes*, *Dateline*, news programs, and C-Span. Ask them to identify key ideas each program. Outline the program's key ideas.
3. Correct the main ideas based on the teacher's analysis of the program.
4. Discuss how the information was blocked and how listening could be improved in this particular situation. Describe the attitudes and habits that decrease listening effectiveness.
5. Talk about the impact of lost or misinterpreted information on our perceptions of reality and the resultant poor communication with other people.

Teacher Preparation

1. Videotape appropriate materials for the exercise.
2. View and analyze the videotape *before* the students complete the activity.
3. Prepare a list of main ideas to use to correct student responses.
4. Review listening lecture notes before the activity.



Chapter 10



Giving/Accepting Criticism

Purpose: Give the students experience presenting and accepting criticism.

Procedure

1. Explain

Critic responsibilities—develop specific problems, identify possible causes, develop possible solutions, anticipate likely reactions, word criticisms positively, set up a positive environment, organize interview (group questions).

Respondent responsibilities—identify their strengths and weaknesses, gather examples supporting performance and/or explaining weaknesses, analyze interview's personality, listen and clarify criticisms (ask for specifics), respond non-defensively to criticisms.

2. Provide scenario—A principal is to provide a teacher with an evaluation of their performance. It should motivate the teacher to improve his or her instruction. The teacher should learn what they need to do in order to improve their work.

3. Divide the class into pairs.

4. Assign one student to portray the principal and one student to portray the teacher.

5. Those students playing the role of the teacher should brainstorm a teacher profile describing their teaching style, background, strengths, weaknesses, and experience. The principal group should develop specific criticisms with evidence and examples. In addition, they should prepare and group questions for the interview. Organize the interview into an introduction, body, and conclusion.

6. Have the dyads practice the interview.

7. Arrange an interview area. Look in business magazines or observe business or professional arrangements in your community.

8. Each pair will present their interview, while the class and the teacher observe the exercise.

continued

9. The teacher should offer an oral critique to the students.
10. After all the interviews have been critiqued, engage the students in a discussion on ways the interview could have been more effective.

Teacher Preparation

1. The teacher should review the interview critique checklist from objective # 4.
2. Review key concepts for the exercise.
3. Create new scenarios and other occupations to vary the exercise.



Award Speech/Acceptance Speech

Purpose: Give students experience presenting and accepting awards.

Procedure

1. Explain:
 - a. Elements of an award speech—attention step, describe award and its purpose, define criteria for the award, connect winner to the criteria or define criteria for the award, announce winner (order depends on whether the winner is known; if there are multiple candidates, the latter order is appropriate, if the winner is already known, use the first order), lead applause, invite winner to the speaking area, present award and shake hands.
 - b. Winner's responsibilities—accept the award, thank the awarding entity and the people, be modest, give credit to others that contributed to your success, describe the award's importance, and keep it brief.
2. Provide scenario—Your company annually awards a five thousand dollar prize to its most outstanding employee. All five departments nominate a candidate. All five nominees are present at the ceremony.
3. Divide the class into pairs.
4. Assign each student to be either the presenter or the recipient.
5. Instruct the presenter to prepare an one-minute congratulatory speech, using the scenario presented in #2 above. The recipient should prepare a one-minute response.
6. The dyad should practice their roles.
7. Each pair should use the podium and the lectern. Arrange the room beforehand to reflect the scenario established in the exercise.

continued

8. Each dyad presents their award speech, followed by the acceptance speech from their partner.
9. The teacher should offer an oral critique. When all the pairs have presented their speeches, the teacher should lead a discussion on basic concepts.

Teacher Preparation

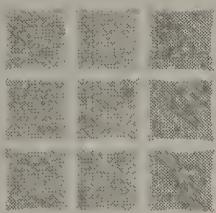
1. Create a handout for the students covering step # 1 in the procedure section.
2. Write two or three scenarios for the exercise.
3. Review key concepts.



Final Examination, Public Speaking

The purpose of this test is to have the student apply the knowledge they have learned in the class to three speeches. The essay must assign grades to each sample speech. In addition, each grade must be justified through a complete analysis of the performance. Essentially, each student is to compare the performances to the concepts taught in the class. The student is evaluated based on how well they demonstrate their understanding of public speaking concepts through their application of speech concepts to the behaviors presented in each speech. Listed below are several areas that the student should approach in the essay.

1. State criteria being used to evaluate the speeches. What are the critical areas that make a speech effective? What common principles should be used to evaluate these performances?
2. Please quote specifically from the speech to support the critique's credibility.
3. Give specific reasons for the grade: eye contact was poor, organization rambled, and so on.
4. Do not repeat what I said in class lectures as a critique.
5. Offer constructive suggestions for the improvement of the speech. Provide concrete ideas to improve the performance.
6. Focus on positive behaviors as well as negative ones. Give specific praise for precise behaviors.
7. You may use your notes and books.
8. Please structure the essay by taking each speech as it was given to discuss in complete sentences and clear paragraphs.
9. The essay can be typed or handwritten.
10. Demonstrate your understanding of the course content through your analysis of these speeches.

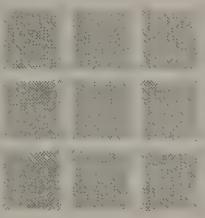


Chapter Reports

1. Divide class into groups of four students.
2. No reading or recitation of the speech.
3. Each group will
 - A. Read and study the chapter.
 - B. Isolate two or three key ideas from each chapter.
 - C. Each person will present a three- to five-minute speech explaining a key idea or a part of such an idea.
 - D. Prepare an overall introduction and conclusion for the report.
4. Grading
 - A. Twenty percent of the grade is based on the outline.
 - B. Eighty percent of the grade is based on the presentation.

Evaluation Speech

1. Use the Sample Outline Format.
2. No reading or recitation of the speech.
3. Each student will:
 - A. View the assigned speeches on the videotape or in person.
 - B. Develop two main points to evaluate the speech
 1. positive speaker behaviors.
 2. negative speaker behaviors.
 - C. Examples from the speech, lecture notes, and your text will serve as evidence.
4. Grading
 - A. Twenty percent of the grade is based on the outline.
 - B. Eighty percent of the grade is based on the presentation.

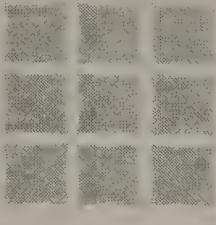


Impromptu Speech

1. Each student will have a choice of three topics:
 - A. “What communication problems do you face everyday? How can these difficulties be solved?”
 - B. “How do speeches and essays differ? Describe the differences and similarities between the written and the oral medium.”
 - C. “What is the impact of nonverbal symbols on the success of communication? What types of messages are best suited to the nonverbal medium?”
2. Each student will have five minutes to prepare their speech.
3. Each student is expected to speak at least one minute but no more than three minutes.
4. The student may use notes if they wish.
5. The speech is graded based on the overall performance and the content of the speech.

Group Impromptu Speech

1. Divide the class into groups.
2. Each group will:
 - A. Read a chapter from the textbook
 - B. Identify as a group the three or four key ideas in that chapter.
 - C. Write a speech using the Sample Outline Format.
 - D. The group will select one person to present a speech over their chapter.
 - E. Critique the speaker’s practice speech.
3. The class will hear and critique each speech.
4. Grading is based on the use of the outline and the delivery of the speech.

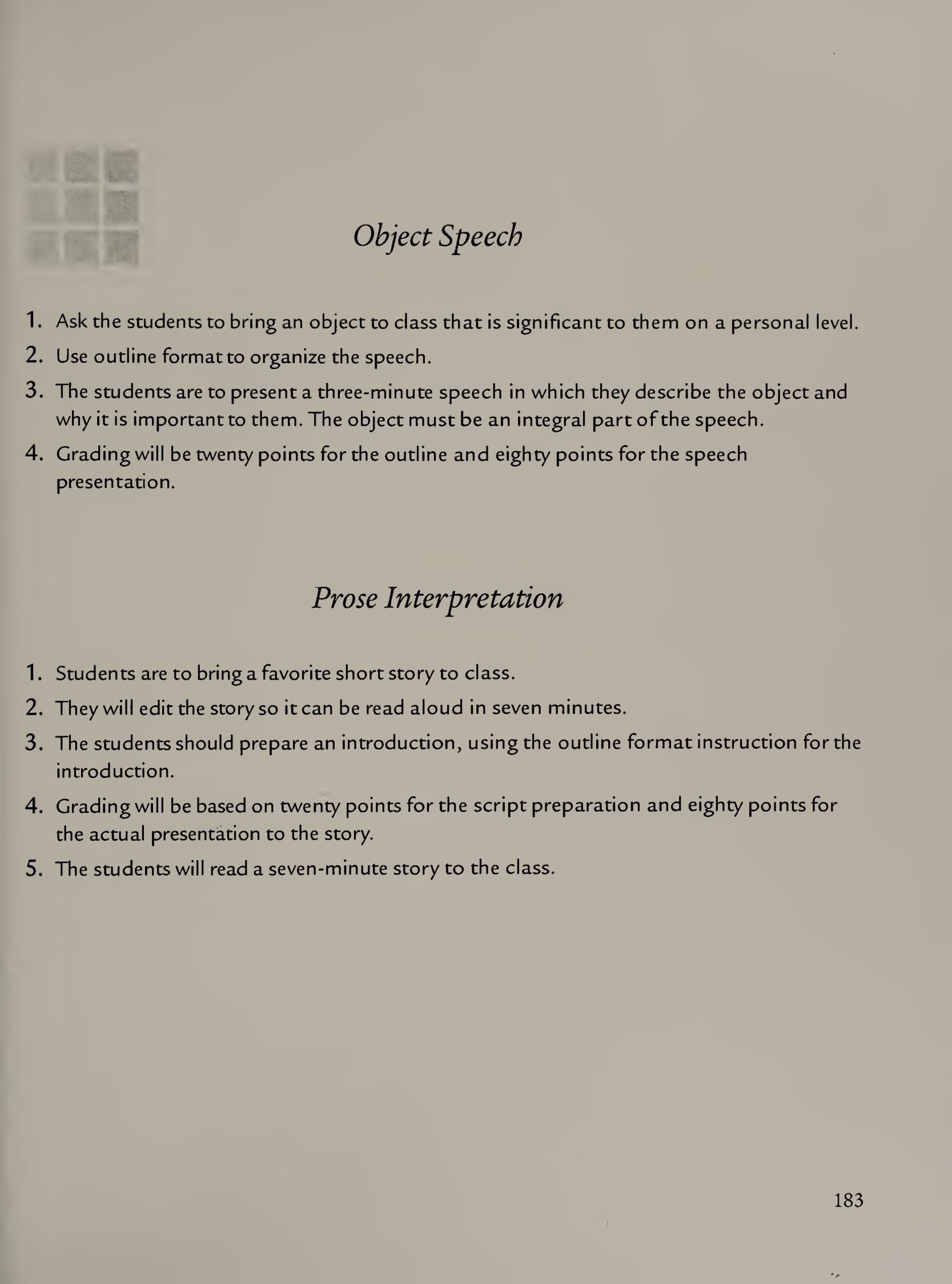


Biography Speech

1. Use the Sample Outline Format.
2. No reading or recitation.
3. Class is divided into pairs.
4. Each pair will interview each other:
 - A. Develop a three-minute speech introducing the person.
 - B. Develop two key ideas that you wish to share about that person.
 - C. Evidence is the speaker's observations and student's answers.
5. Grading
 - A. Twenty percent based on the outline.
 - B. Eighty percent based on the performance.

Career Speech

1. Use Sample Outline Format. Sept. 20th speech due
2. No reading or recitation.
3. The student will:
 - A. Prepare a three-minute speech describing a present or potential career.
 - B. Assume that the class is composed of thirty sixth graders. Your child is a student in that class.
 - *C. Relate the speech to the age, education, and maturity level of the students.
 - D. Speech must contain information about the career's responsibilities, qualifications, advantages, disadvantages, and so on.
 - E. The evidence should come from your own experiences and outside sources.
4. Grading
 - A. Twenty percent is based on the outline.
 - B. Eighty percent is based on the presentation.



Object Speech

1. Ask the students to bring an object to class that is significant to them on a personal level.
2. Use outline format to organize the speech.
3. The students are to present a three-minute speech in which they describe the object and why it is important to them. The object must be an integral part of the speech.
4. Grading will be twenty points for the outline and eighty points for the speech presentation.

Prose Interpretation

1. Students are to bring a favorite short story to class.
2. They will edit the story so it can be read aloud in seven minutes.
3. The students should prepare an introduction, using the outline format instruction for the introduction.
4. Grading will be based on twenty points for the script preparation and eighty points for the actual presentation to the story.
5. The students will read a seven-minute story to the class.



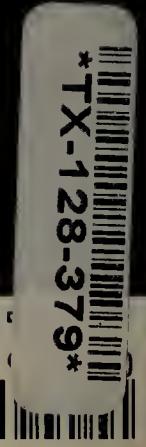
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